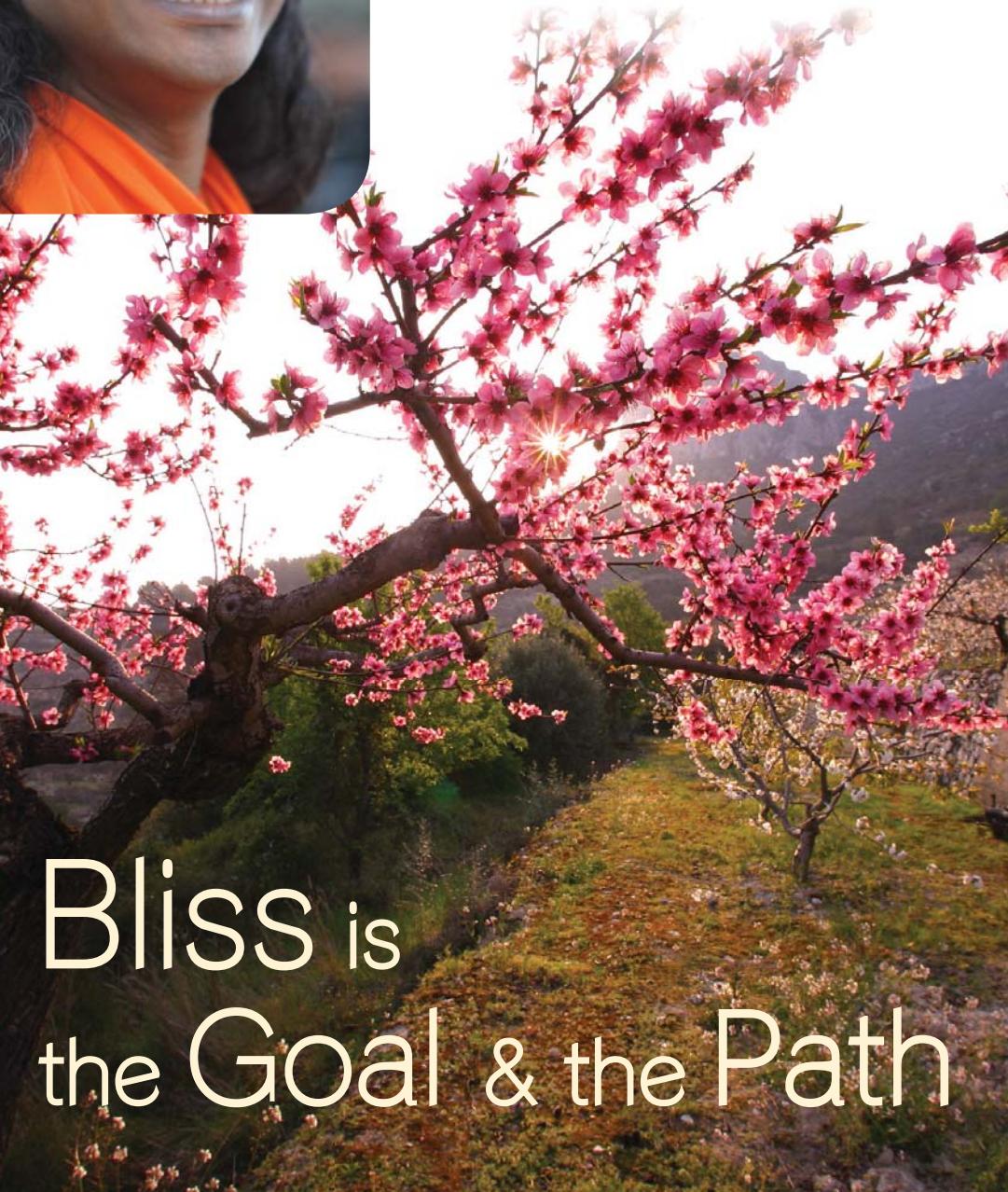




Nithyananda



Bliss is
the Goal & the Path

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Bliss is the Goal & the Path

N i t h y a n a n d a

Talks given in USA on Life Solutions



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Someone asked me: Can dead Masters also teach? I replied, 'Dead masters are not dead as you think. They may be physically absent, but their spirit is present. Physically they may be absent but spiritually, they are present. When they were alive physically, their presence had the body. When they are gone, their presence has no body, but they are present. Their presence is in no way related to their body. Dead masters are not absent as you think. In the same way, living masters are not present as you think. Be very clear. I am neither present as you see nor absent as you think. The more you grow spiritually, the deeper you will experience my presence. Your idea about dead masters' absence and my presence are both wrong.'

- Nithyananda



Chapter 1



Under the Banyan Tree

*Chitram vatatharormulae vrudha shishya
gururyuva;
Gurostu maunam vyakyanam shishyastu
chinnasamsayat.*

What a wonder! This vision under the banyan tree! The teacher is a young boy, the taught are old men! The teacher is silent, yet the doubts of the disciples are dissolved!

Over thousand years ago, Adi Sankara, the great reformer saint of Hinduism, sang the praise of the young Master Dakshinamurthy, an incarnation of Lord Shiva, the rejuvenator in the Hindu mythological trinity, teaching disciples far older than him in silence under a banyan tree. Dakshinamurthy is the archetypal spiritual Master, who though young was enlightened and was sought after by other enlightened Masters far older than him.

Whenever Nithyananda is in his ashram in Bidadi near Bangalore, what Adi Sankara said happens almost every day just the way he sang the praise of Dakshinamurthy years ago. Under a magnificent Banyan tree that is over 300 years old, a young enlightened Master leads a group of far older men and women in prayer, meditation and discourse. Majestic, graceful,



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with powerful words and compassionate as a mother, Nithyananda is an enlightened master whose mission is to transform individuals through *dhyana*, meditation.

He had a divine vision that he should set up an ashram in a place near Bangalore that would have a large Banyan tree. The name Dhyanapeetam came to him as the name for this spiritual center of his movement, as well as his mission to transform people across the globe through meditation. Three years ago, he had only Tamil speaking people in rural Tamilnadu who came to him, mostly to be healed. Today, in 24 countries across the globe, the Nithyananda Foundation flag flies high. More than 400 *Acharyas* (teachers) teach his techniques in these countries and over 3000 spiritual healers ordained by him, heal over 20,000 people every day.

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The transformation that he has wrought in many is nothing short of miraculous. Helping someone shed his ego is far more difficult than materializing objects through the air.

He says time and again: **I am not here to prove I am God. I am here to prove that you are God.**

What may sound pompous and laughable from any one else, comes across as Divine Truth when the Master says it with authority. The Bhagavad Gita is considered a scripture only

because of the authority with which Lord Krishna, the Lord and Master delivers it.

The Bhagavad Gita is traditionally not part of the Vedas, the four Hindu scriptural works that were revealed to enlightened sages and which remained unwritten for many thousands of years, and communicated by just word of mouth. The Bhagavad Gita forms part of the Hindu epic, the Mahabharata, the story of two warring clans, the five Pandava Princes and their hundred cousins - the Kaurava Princes. In the great war of the Mahabharata, Arjuna the Pandava Prince seeks to surrender rather than fight his respected elders and loved relatives.



Lord Krishna is the charioteer of Arjuna and his advice to Arjuna on the battlefield is the Bhagavad Gita. The Gita as it is more popularly known, is read by millions even today and followed as a guideline for day-to-day life issues. Lord Krishna's advice to Arjuna, the representation of the confused human being constantly under dilemma, is considered the fifth Hindu scripture based on Krishna's authority. There is nothing to doubt and therefore it became part of the *sruti*, unwritten scriptures created from awareness.

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Every word that Nithyananda utters is *sruti*, the Eternal Truth, as also his blessing 'Be Blissful'!

The young boy teaching men far older than him is to us an incarnation of Dakshinamurthy, the



primal Guru, who is as well the presiding deity under the Banyan tree at Bidadi. The Master is Shiva, the Master of Masters, the Lord of *jnana* (wisdom) and *dhyana* (meditation) under whose tutelage, transformational miracles happen every day at the ashram and world over.

Thousands come to the Master with burning issues and questions:

What do I really want to do in my life?

What will give me real happiness?

How can I make this world a better place to live in? How can I make a difference to this world?

These are questions that have arisen in the human mind, since time immemorial. They may come to different people at different junctures in their lives. To some, it is in the form of a jolt in life, a trauma of one form or another that shakes up the smooth life that they had been living till then. The loss of a loved one or a sudden downturn in business or a health problem may trigger these questions.

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To some others, it could come when they feel they have achieved all that they wanted to - a good education at the most respected university in the chosen field of interest, the desired job with a great salary, a happy married life and so on. But at the end of it, the person wonders if he had been driving himself this far to achieve

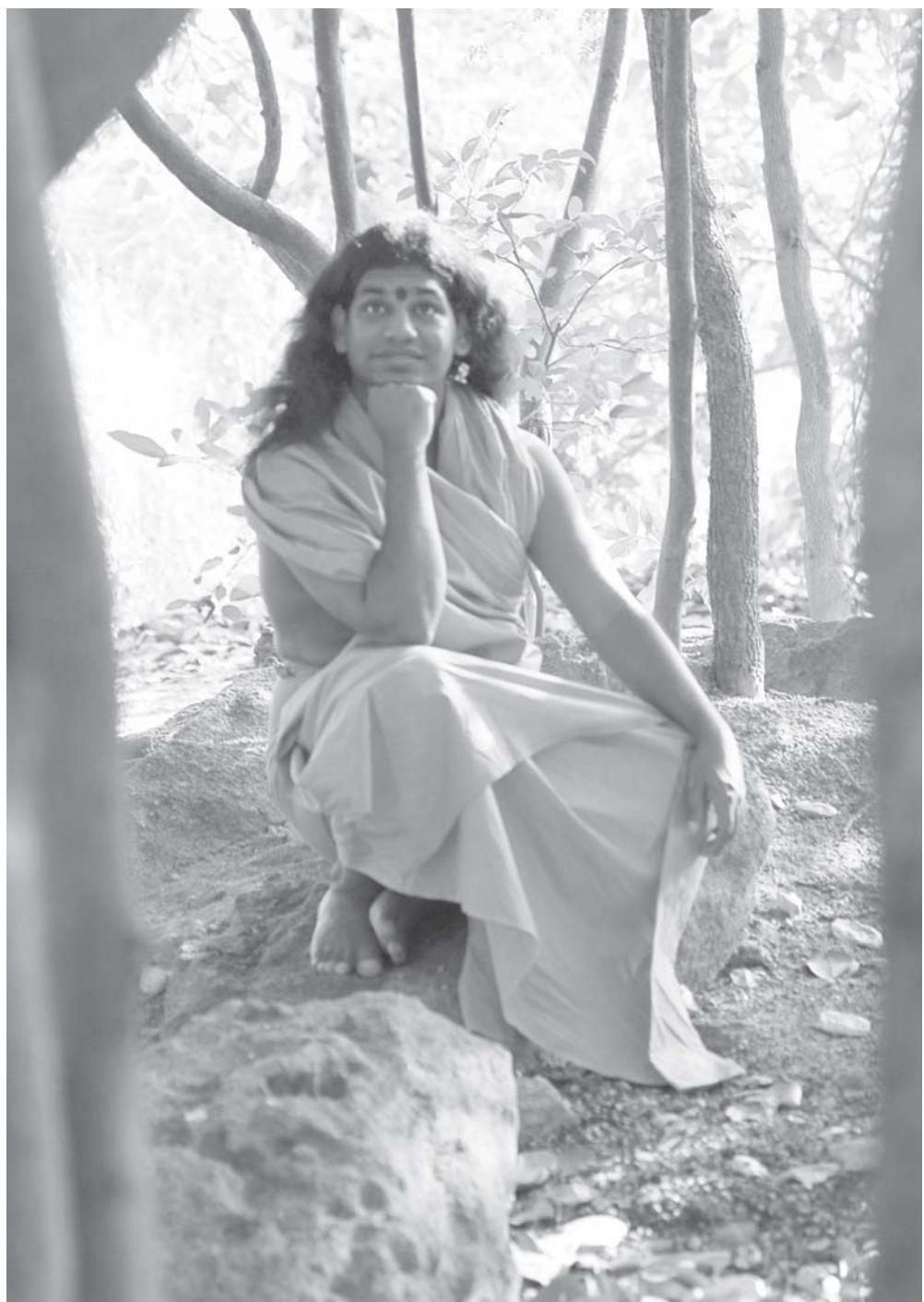
BLISS IS THE GOAL AND THE PATH

just these things! He feels he has got the very things he wanted but he wonders 'now what?' Life brings the person face to face with these fundamental questions ranging from '*What do I really want?*', '*What am I living for?*' to '***Who am I?***'

Without pulling any punches, Nithyananda answers these queries in his discourses and programs. This book is a compilation of some of his discourses on the topic 'Bliss is the path and the goal' where he makes one understand with no uncertainty that the path itself is the goal, which again is bliss itself!



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Chapter 2



The Journey

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BLISS IS THE GOAL AND THE PATH

A small Zen story:

A young disciple had just entered a Zen monastery.

He said to the Zen Master, 'I have just entered the monastery. Please teach me something.'

The Master looked at him and asked, 'Have you eaten your rice porridge?'

The monk replied, 'Yes, I have eaten.'

The Master said, 'Then you better wash your bowl.'

At that moment, the monk was enlightened!

This may sound absurd when you hear it for the first time. The Master was telling the disciple to wash his bowl after he had eaten. What he actually meant was, the disciple was so full with the knowledge he had acquired, with what he had picked up from various places, from various philosophies; there was no room for anything more to enter, for any clarity to happen. Cryptically he says, 'you better wash your bowl', and the monk was simply struck by the statement and became enlightened!

This is how Zen Masters caused spiritual awakening in their disciples. In just one



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moment, the disciple would be awakened. Enlightenment, self-realization, the state of eternal bliss, or whatever you want to call it, is actually as easy as removing your coat and putting it on the coat stand! It is that simple. But because of our layers and layers of social conditioning, we look upon it as something far away from us, something difficult to achieve.

Actually, it is not something to be achieved at all because it is already there in you! How can you achieve something that is already there in you?! All you need to do is drop these layers of illusion, these layers of social conditioning, and you will see that you are already bliss. The concepts like seeking, or traveling in a spiritual journey are just ways to postpone your own flowering. You are banging on a door that is already open.

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All that a Master needs to do is, awaken you to this truth, that's all. That is why Zen Masters adopted abrupt and sometimes harsh methods that will simply shake the disciple from his intellect and illusion, and cause self-realization in a moment's time.

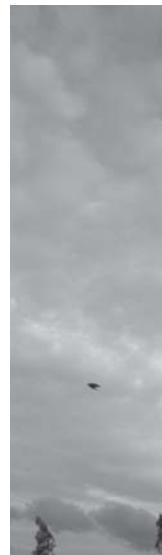
When a Master starts his work on you, awareness will start to grip you and you will realize with every passing moment, with every action of yours, with every thought of yours, that the Master is only showing you what you already are. He just peels off layers and layers in you like peeling an onion and with every

layer getting peeled, you will feel lighter and a beautiful feeling of coming home. That feeling of coming home is only coming closer to your core, to the core from the periphery, from far away from your home to closer to your home. And what do we mean by home? Our true Self.

Of course, when the disciple is really ready, this will happen. In the path of seeking, the space inside is created and kept ready so that awakening can happen. But the problem arises because we get stuck in seeking.

Seeking should create the space in us to flower, else it is not seeking; it is simply a trip to fulfill your ego in the field of spirituality, that's all. It is simply to tell people that you know a lot about God and great philosophies that you have read and not digested, which you are vomiting on others.

Seeking is not creating something, it is destroying something – your ignorance of your true self. Seeking is not searching. Be very clear: If you seek in the hope of finding something, you will land up in terrible frustration. That is why most often you will find that there is a cynicism, a sarcasm, a disrespect in the tone of some of the exhausted seekers. They will be on the brink of turning their backs on the Truth or they will think they have found it and start convincing you with their own nonsensical philosophies.



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If you understand that there is no search here at all, there is only discovering, then every minute is a golden opportunity to peel off yet another layer and take one more step closer to the core. Then, the peeling itself becomes enjoyable; the path itself becomes bliss, because you are on the right path! When you are not in the right path, what happens? Instead of peeling off layers, if you keep them intact and search and add on layers to your already fat self, what happens? You will feel suffocated, burdened and you will wonder what life is all about.

So instead of adding on layers of stuff, you need to peel off layers and feel the joy in the path towards the core. This is when bliss becomes the path and the goal. This is what all Masters mean when they tell you that you are bliss and you are yet to only discover it. This is what I mean when I say, 'your journey inwards'. The journey to bliss is always inward; it is the only way. When your journey goes inward, bliss becomes your lifeline and automatically the outer world happens seamlessly.

And when the outer world happens seamlessly, you start living like a King, like a *Paramahamsa*. *Paramahamsas* are the only living Kings, mind you. All the other kings are called so because of their material possessions. They have only wealth not richness. They have quantity, not quality. But a *Paramahamsa* is the real king who enjoys the richness of the being, the richness of the inner and outer worlds. He

lives like a lotus in a pond, untouched by the water and coveted by all.

So understand the real meaning of seeking. Don't allow your mind to get caught in the game of seeking. The mind itself is a myth and the game of seeking can take your mind to a complex web of mythology. Understand that your mind and the concept of seeking are the only two things that keep you away from God. If you understand this experientially, you will automatically drop seeking and start shedding all that is not you.

Seeking is simply shedding all that is not you, all that is keeping you away from the Truth, all that is keeping you in bondage to any place, person or thing, all that is ready to grab you and put you inside a frame. This is seeking.

So many religions and so many teachings have come into being over the past. Enlightened Masters and ancient seers have laid down formulae for people to experience what they experienced themselves. Each formula is one religion, one teaching. It is enough if you follow any one religion, any one teaching which works for you.

See for yourself if you are experiencing more clarity, more awareness inside you and better interpersonal relationships. See if you are able to watch what is happening without getting involved in everything around you. Then you



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have found the right teaching, the right path.

What people generally do is, they get confused by the different religious teachings and get stuck in following them instead of using them as a tool to flower. And because of so many complex teachings and religious fanaticism, many people doubt if they are even qualified for a spiritual awakening! Spirituality seems like some complex thing which you need courage to choose and have an option to skip choosing until the next life.

Very often, I have heard people say, 'I am not ready for it. Maybe not this time, next time. I have to become a lot more mature to get into all this. This is too early for me. Let me finish my responsibilities and I will come to the ashram.'

First of all, no one is calling these people to the ashram. Secondly, they have a totally wrong concept of spirituality itself. There is nothing called 'being mature' and 'being ready'. All these are mere play of the mind. But one thing, when someone says these things, the Master waits for a while and allows them to settle before making the next move, because the mind can play havoc otherwise.

They fail to understand that spirituality is a way of living life at its peak in all aspects – 360 degrees, from the being level. It can make life so rich that one will not have a hangover in

anything. Spirituality is an attitude. Spirituality is infusing spirit into life. Because people have misunderstood religion, they have misunderstood spirituality also.

If it is an attitude, then is there any sense in waiting for the right time to wear it? It is ridiculous to say that, is it not? To wear an attitude, you need not wait for anything to happen, for your children to grow or your retirement to approach or anything. It is just changing the way you are by bringing in awareness and shedding all that you are not, that's all.

A man came to Ramana Maharishi, a great enlightened Master from India and asked, 'Bhagavan, when will I be qualified to be able to follow your spiritual path?'

Ramana Maharishi looked at him silently for a while and asked, 'Are you alive?'

The questioner said, 'Yes, of course I am!'

Ramana declared, 'If you are alive, you are fully qualified to be spiritually awakened.'

The only interest of an enlightened Master is our inner growth. He has no interest in controlling us. He is interested in removing our doubts about our own potential. He is interested in uncovering the veil of ignorance and helping us discover that we are one with the whole of



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Existence, that we are not separate from it, that we are an integral part of this grand show that is going on!

We are constantly in doubt about our own potential. This doubt is there all the time because we think we are separate from Existence. We limit ourselves, our potential, our capacity, because we fail to understand that we are part of the infinite Existential energy.

Whether we believe it or not, accept it or not, want it or not, we are part of the Divine. But we are not ready to believe it. When someone tells us that we too are Divine, we think that they are crazy. I always tell people: I am not here to prove that I am God, I am here to prove that *you* are God! They look at me with shock when I tell them that!

I tell people, 'you are already enlightened, just express it!' They think I am crazy when I say this! The core of the onion is within it, am I right? In the same way, your core is within you. You only need to experience it and express it from your experience.

Why are Masters so graceful, so stately, so joyful to look at even if they lift a small finger? It is because every expression of theirs is from their blissful inner core that they have realized. When the core is realized, the boundaries disappear, and you become one with Existence. And when you become one with Existence, you radiate the Existential energy around you and

automatically all that you do becomes beautiful, which is why you are here for hours together watching me undauntedly!

Actually, you are identifying with your own blissful self in my presence, through watching me. That is why it is so joyful for you. The deep and unconscious yearning in you to experience the self is what causes you to experience and enjoy me. But instead of attributing it to your own beautiful Self, you attribute it to me, my form, and that is where the problem starts!

If you understood for a moment that what you are enjoying through me is actually yourself, you will automatically love me, you and everyone around with the same intensity as you feel for me because you would have then understood that the divinity that you see in me is actually there in every other animate and inanimate object.

After all, the universally accepted statement, be it the Holy Bible or the Bhagavad Gita or the Holy Quran, is that God is in everything and everything is divinity, is it not? Then how can you see God only in me? You should be able to see God in everyone else. Through me, you can be led to seeing God in everyone else. Only when that happens, the purpose of my mission is fulfilled as far as you are concerned.

And mind you, it will happen with time, depending on your willingness to allow



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intelligence to step in and make it happen for you. If you function with deep awareness around a Master, you will catch the smell of Existence in him and automatically in everyone and everything around him. Awareness is the master key.

The problem is, although religions were created with the single purpose of helping man realize that he is God, for man to experience God in him, over the years, religious priests started using religion as a tool to distance man from God and to create a permanent doubt in him about realizing God so that he may become dependent on them for it. This is how they have been playing with us.

Once they sow the seed of doubt in us, we start looking to them for solutions, for techniques. Then they pose to be mediums between God and us and start controlling us! The whole purpose of religion then gets defeated. But these people continue to carry on their business.

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I tell you, just ask these people what qualification they possess to control you in this fashion. As long as they are offering you some clarity on the fact that you are part of Existence, it is alright. The moment they start telling you what you should do and should not do to please God, be very clear, they are not qualified in any way to guide you.

When we go on the yearly pilgrimage to the Himalayas, I see people breaking away from our

group and going behind the *pandas*, the priests there to give offering to the Lord. It really amuses me. They leave a live Master and place their faith on a *panda* to reach God!

They pay them huge amounts of money and sit with the *panda* who gives a small offering on their behalf to the Lord. The only intent of the *panda* will be to grab the maximum money from them. These people, unconcerned about that, will be sitting in all earnestness, trying to feel the non-existent spiritual fervor in the *panda's* chants.

I try telling people not to go behind these *pandas*, at least when they come with me. But, even after my telling them, if they want to do these things then I leave it to them.

And sometimes, in the name of religion, people bring in rules and condemn others from doing certain things. They bring in divisions of some sort and make you feel spiritually inferior; they condemn you in the name of man-made barriers. No one is inferior or superior to any one. If a religion cannot accept you for what you are, the whole purpose of following it is lost.

We follow a religion or teaching because we want to overcome our shortcomings, our blocks, and continuously cleanse our consciousness. When this is the case, if the religion is going to condemn us for what we are, how can we even make a beginning with it? It sounds ridiculous, is it not? We are not even given a chance! It is like saying, 'Become pure, then I will cleanse



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you'! We are turning towards religion to purify ourselves, to empty our conditioning and acquire deeper understanding. Then what is the purpose in laying these conditions?

Organized religions over the years create this sort of confusion. They even counter spirituality. Spirituality is about discovering who we are. It is the search for the ultimate Truth about our self and our relationship with Existence or God or whatever you wish to call it. The problem is, religions, once organized, are more concerned about power and whatever leads to power. All organized religions exploit us through greed and fear, through clever manipulation of heaven and hell. It is the confusion between religion and spirituality that also leads to the question of whether we are qualified. We are constantly told that we are sinners and as such incompetent to realize God.

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But with a Master, a real Master, he will never ask you whether you are qualified, what your qualities are, what was your past, what is your economic and social background. He never instils guilt in you to have control over you; he never makes you feel like a sinner; he simply welcomes you for what you are and directs every ounce of energy in cleansing your consciousness. That is the reason he draws people irrespective of religion, caste and creed. He gives what the being needs, with endless compassion, with no strings attached.

A beautiful Zen story:

A disciple asks his Master, 'Master, am I qualified for spiritual progress? I feel there are many obstructions.'

The Master replies, 'The word *obstruction* is the only obstruction, nothing else!'

A Master is a living example to show you that you can experience what he has experienced. He is there to remove your doubts about yourself. All that is needed from your side is a little trust in him.

Patanjali, an enlightened Master lived in India over 5000 years ago. Patanjali's book *Yoga Sutra* is the greatest compilation of techniques to liberate the being from the mind and unite the being with the cosmic energy, of which it is a part.

In his book of instructions, he defines various paths to enlightenment. He defines eight paths in all: *yama* – which deals with 5 important virtues, *niyama* – which deals with 5 rules of conduct, *pratyahara* – which is the path of detachment, *pranayama* - techniques to do with the breath, *asana* - techniques to do with one's sitting posture, *dharana* - consciousness, *dhyana* – meditation, and finally *samadhi* - which is the enlightenment state or no-mind state.

The first step *yama*, lays down guidelines for one's behavior and this alone consists of five



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parts: celibacy, truth, non-violence, not stealing, and not wanting to possess. Only after you practice all these parts and master them, are you qualified to move up to the next step in yogic accomplishment.

A man came and asked me, 'Master, I am not qualified in these steps. I have never practiced *yama* and *niyama*; how can I learn Yoga?'

I said to him, 'If you are already qualified in these steps, you do not need Yoga!'

Patanjali laid down techniques thousands of years ago. Over time, many great Masters have updated them to suit man's changing ways.

It is like this: In our own lives, don't we find that what worked for our children does not work for our grand children and what worked for our grand children does not work for our great grand children? If we kept our children quiet through some basic threats and it worked well with them, then our grand children would probably threaten us back with the same statements and carry on with their pranks, is it not so? So, we find that we need new ways of handling them.

The Journey of a 1000 Miles

A lady was asking her three-year-old son what he wanted from America.

He said, 'I want a watch that tells the time.'

She asked him, 'What are you talking? You already have a watch that tells the time.'

The three year old replied, 'No it doesn't. I have to look at it.'

Children are so updated these days. So, what Patanjali devised was for men of that age and time. Today, man is made differently. We need different types of techniques to handle him. But understand, we are not blaming Patanjali's techniques or saying that it is inadequate. It was devised for the man of that age and time and it worked well then, that's all. We need to understand that clearly.

Meditation and maturity go hand in hand. With meditation, spiritual maturity and release of energy happens in us. This maturity and energy release further propels us into deeper meditation. Spiritual maturity is enhanced under the tutelage of a Master. The Master's grace accelerates the spiritual growth and guides the disciple in the right path.

Meditation connects us to the cosmic energy, of which we are a part and as a process, helps us focus the energy in the right direction to progress spiritually.

In the present day world, Patanjali's techniques take a lot of time. In today's world, we don't have time for anything, especially for ourselves, our personal growth. At the same time, as human beings, by our very nature, we find ourselves facing fundamental questions like 'Who am I?' When everything in the material world



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has been reached, when all the burning desires have been fulfilled, there is still a void in us. That void prompts us to look inwards, to ask these questions. These questions have the potential to become burning quests; they can take us from questions to quest, from urge to urgency – to understand the truth.

In this age, more than spiritual practices, *Dhyana* or meditation is the answer to enlightenment. It is a shortcut method which is foolproof and without side effects. The only side effect is bliss and realization of your own Self! If you are a being with consciousness, it is enough to embark upon the spiritual path. The very desire that you wish to start on this path is a true indication that you are qualified.

It is said in Tao, 'A journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step.' I tell you, this is not even a journey of a 1000 miles, it is a journey of a single step onto the path, that's all! Once you are on the path, you are in the goal! That is why I say, 'Bliss is the path and the goal!' Bliss is not any goal to be achieved by traveling. Once you are on the path, the path *itself* is bliss. It is the *first step* that breaks the inertia. That is enough! So just decide and take that step now! You are qualified!



Chapter 3



Quantum Spirituality

A monk asked his Master, 'What is the Buddha?'

'The One in the hall', said the Master.

The monk said, 'The One in the hall is a statue, a lump of mud.'

'That is so', responded the Master.

The monk got irritated and asked, 'What is the Buddha?'

'The One in the hall', said the Master.

The Master was trying to tell his disciple that the Buddha could not be known by asking questions such as 'What is the Buddha?' The Buddha is to be experienced; it is to be understood through an awakening. When awakening happens, you understand that *you are Buddha!* This is how the Buddha can be understood.

It is like this: I have tasted nectar. Just by explaining the sweetness of it to you, by explaining its texture to you, by explaining about my experience of it to you, can you understand anything about nectar? No! But if you just taste it once, you will know exactly what it is! Only tasting will help. Until then you can have an



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idea that it is sweet, that it is smooth etc, that's all. But you cannot feel the real joy of it till you taste it for yourself.

A Master will always draw you to experience. Intellectual understanding is alright; it will help in creating a thirst in you to know, to experience. But ultimately, you have to experience it for yourself. The problem is, these hard-core intellectual people start thinking that they have experienced it through their mere understanding of it and they start stagnating at that level. They either become headstrong on this account or start feeling bored on account of it.

Quantum Spirituality

If they get a glimpse of the experience even once, they will simply drop their intellect and understand that the experience is unmatched and that the intellect is only the base or the foundation, not the building itself. Just the foundation will not do. The foundation is created in a solid way so that the building can rise on it undauntedly. In the same way, all intellectual understanding is only for us to rise above and experience what the intellect offered as a conviction.

In life, we are always looking for 'yes – no' answers, for choices, because we are so caught up with our intellect, with our logic. We are never willing to let the experience happen to us, in a natural and beautiful way. Because of our hurry to make choices in everything, we invariably choose wrongly. In our hurry, we

simply discard or exclude things and later regret it. There may be no need to discard anything, but we discard because we are habituated to choosing.

A small story:

An American was traveling in England by train.

In the compartment, there was a British gentleman, an American gentleman and a lady who had a dog with her.

The dog kept pestering the American by jumping on him and dirtying his clothes.

The lady seemed oblivious to the fact that her dog was being a nuisance to him.

In fact, she tried to comfort the restless dog by saying, 'O, you poor thing! You must be feeling really bored sitting in the train. We will reach our destination soon, don't worry.'

Next, the dog jumped on the American and pissed on him.

Yet, the lady offered no apologies to the American and instead pacified the dog saying, 'You must be having an upset stomach. I will give you some medicine as soon as we reach our destination.'

The dog continued to bother the American.

Finally, the American got fed up, picked up the dog and threw it out of the window.



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The British gentleman was watching what was happening all this while.

He turned to the American and exclaimed, 'You Americans are so crazy! You drive on the wrong side of the road, you use the wrong hand for the fork and now to top it all you have thrown the wrong one out of the window!'

In life, we continuously keep throwing the wrong person out of the window! We are always making choices and in the process, choosing wrongly and regretting our choice at some later point in time. The pity is that we always feel that we are doing the right thing by having to make a decision of one option over another.

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Choices and options need to be exercised when there are contradictions and controversies. But I tell you, there is no controversy in Existence; there are no contradictions. Only humans perceive contradictions in nature, where there are actually none. The trees, the animals, the insects all are happily living in harmony with nature. They don't seem to see any contradictions or push and pull in Existence. Only humans seem to be always seeing problems and paradoxes in Existence.

If you notice early in the morning, all the creatures rise to the warm rays of the sun. They joyously wake up, eager to face the new dawn. The chirping birds sing joyously, the fresh leaves on plants open up to receive the rays of

the sun, the flowers bloom naturally in the morning. Take a cat – it will wake up, stretch itself, go for a round and check out the boundaries of its dwelling place and then start the day. They all move in such synchronicity with Existence. Man is the only being that gets up in the morning, turns over and goes back to sleep!

Existence is like an orchestra; it is all encompassing. All beings play the roles of different musicians, each with its own unique and irreplaceable role. Man is the only being who wants to break from the orchestra and play his solo music. What happens when somebody in an orchestra refuses to play according to the tunes of the conductor and the rest of the band? His tune will be jarring and will only add noise to the symphony! This is what happens when we perceive contradictions in Existence and try to impose our own shortsighted perception into things.

We are all like waves in the ocean. If the wave starts considering itself as separate from the ocean, it will be in continuous fear of the ocean. This is because it does not understand the simple truth that the wave arose from the ocean, is existing in the ocean and finally will fall back into the ocean. Only when it sees this can the wave be utterly relaxed with the complete understanding that it is but a part of the vast ocean.



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People ask me, 'Can we come and stay in the ashram?'

If I say they can stay by all means, they will list out all the reasons as to why and how they cannot come to the ashram.

They will say that they have their business to look after, their family will suffer, their friends will talk ill of them, the ashram is too far to be in, and all such reasons.

If I tell them not to stay in the ashram as they are not yet ready and when they are ready I shall tell them, they will feel hurt and try to convince me with all the points as to how they are ready and how eager they are to come!

They simply make me a part of their dilemma.

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We always live in dilemma. We live in a dilemma of choices that we have to decide upon. We create controversies where there are none in reality. This is exactly what I mean when I say how you feel compelled to make choices in your life and how you suffer because of that.

People ask me, 'Is it not necessary for us to make choices in life? There are so many options and we need to choose, is it not?' they ask.

It is true that life offers choices. There are many forks in the path of life and we have the option to choose amongst them. The concept of

free will is based upon exercising our own choice.

Let me tell you a small story:

A man read in the newspaper about a call for an interview for the post of a consultant.

It said, 'Wanted a consultant with only one arm, with five years of work experience, for a chemical factory.'

The man was puzzled at the condition that said, 'Only one arm.'

He called up the company and enquired, 'I understand your other conditions but why do you want people with only one arm?'

The CEO of the company replied, 'I have had many consultants earlier. They give long advice on each matter and always go on to say - on the other hand... I can't take it any more!'

We simply lose focus in choosing when we are confronted with life with all that it has to offer. We start feeling compelled to choose. And we start making the wrong choices and start regretting them later on. Without the power of foresight, any choice is a gamble. But the problem is, human nature is such that it remembers the losses far more vividly than the gains. As a result, the idea of choice becomes a nightmare for us and we keep falling into its trap with unconscious decision-making.



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We are like a child in a candy store when it comes to exercising our choices in life. The more options we have, the more complex our decision making process becomes. If you have only two shirts or two dresses to choose from, the choice of selection is easy. However, choosing a shirt or a dress in a specialty store can become a nightmare, because our mind is excluding all the time.

Is there a reason why we must choose one option over another? Is there a reason why we cannot accept life as it is? Choice actually gives us such freedom; but we experience it as a terrible bondage. Why is this so? Where are we missing it?

The ancient Chinese wisdom of the Tao is based on the Yin and Yang; symbolizing the male and female, good and evil, darkness and light, black and white. Interplay of these opposites is constant and certain. There can never be good without bad; there can be no light without shadow. That is the way life's cards are dealt to us.

What we have to understand clearly here is this: It is our ability to work with the seemingly opposite qualities in life that leads to fulfillment and happiness and not the power to choose between one and the other! This is the truth that you need to understand.

Let me explain: The very perception of something being good or bad is totally

dependent on the eyes that perceive the situation, am I right? We always see things through the lens of our bias, our past, our expectations, our desires and we think that it is reality. It is something like this. The sky that is covered by the floating clouds is unaffected by the presence of the clouds; it is untouched by the clouds. It only appears to be absent because of the clouds. But, if you look at it and say that the sky has disappeared, will it be a true statement?

If you can see the truth as it is and not bring in your lens into it, if you can just allow the truth to be and facilitate it to prevail, you will never be faced with any dilemma or choice; you will simply flow with Existence. Choosing becomes so important and miserable in your life because you are always looking through your desires, your despair, your anger and what not.

A small story:

A man was suffering from severe multiple injuries after a bad accident.

His friend visited him in the hospital.

He asked him, 'It must be aching throughout your body because of the injuries all over.'

The man replied, 'No not really; only when I laugh!'

Life is to do with your attitude towards it, always. A pessimist is one who always sees the dark side of life while the optimist is one



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who always sees the bright side of things. But the key is, to not feel any compulsion to choose between the two, to go beyond both and just resonate with Existence so that there is no choice to make; just allow the truth to prevail. If this is done, we will not feel misery or happiness that comes with a reason. We will just feel choiceless and helpless bliss, that's all.

The problem is, we forget our divinity and start thinking of ourselves as human beings with limited potential. We limit our infinite potential by the very acceptance that we have limited potential. Realize the infinite capacity in you! Know that the boundless cosmic energy is there for you; be very clear that you can explode in all directions instead of constraining yourself to the imaginary lines of materialism and spiritualism that you have restricted yourself to!

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It boils down to the attitude, the perspective with which we see and perceive our situation. The wise person realizes this and does not get perturbed by anything that seems unpleasant nor does he get carried away by something that seems pleasurable. He will understand that both these are impermanent and hence, not the eternal truth.

A small story:

There was once a great young sage, Sukha.

His father, Vyasa, taught him the knowledge of the Truth and sent him to the court of King Janaka.

Janaka, though a king, was called *videha* meaning 'without a body'.

He was so called because even though he was a king, he was not attached to material pleasures and was established in his Self.

King Janaka came to know that Sukha was coming to him and made arrangements to receive him. When Sukha arrived at the palace gates, the guards did not even take note of him. Even though he was the son of the well-known sage Vyasa, he sat there for three days and three nights with no one to care for him.

After three days, suddenly, the ministers of the king heard that he was waiting outside the palace gates and they rushed to receive him.

They brought him into the palace with all the respect, put him in a magnificent room and gave him the best food and comforts.

But Sukha's face was exactly the same serene one when he was being treated with utmost honor as it was when he was being made to wait outside the palace gates with no respect.

Sukha was taken in front of King Janaka who was sitting on the throne.

There was music, dance and other amusement going on in the court.

Janaka gave him a cup that was filled to the brim with milk and asked him to go around





seven times inside the room without spilling even one drop.

The boy took the cup of milk without a word and he started going around inside the room.

In the midst of all the revelry and the attractions, he was not the least distracted and effortlessly went round the courtroom seven times.

When he brought the cup back to Janaka, the king said, 'I can only repeat what your father has taught you and what you have yourself learnt. You have known the Truth. Go home, my boy.'

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Sukha could not be affected by anything in the world unless he chose to be affected by it. We are the ones who choose to perceive as we do, react as we do. When you realize that it is all a question of seeing through different tinted glasses, each giving a different hue to the scene, you see the foolishness of playing with the lens and you automatically drop the lens.

When you get angry with somebody who says something you don't like, it is you who chooses to react by getting angry and expressing it. You don't realize that it is you who is making this choice and you end up blaming the other person for provoking you. This is the unconscious choice making that goes on inside us continuously.

A small story:

A man got into a boat and rowed his way into the deep parts of the ocean and relaxed for a while.

Suddenly, his boat was jolted and he woke up with great irritation, ready to pounce on the careless boat rider.

He opened his eyes and saw that the other boat was unmanned. It had just lost its moorings and hit the man's boat.

The man was totally stumped.

Whom will he blame?! Just think! Who can he blame? No one! He suddenly realized that there is no one to blame but himself! As long as there is a receiving end, we keep blaming it, but when there is no receiving end? We are stumped! It is then that the idea of blaming suddenly becomes shaky, baseless. All our lives we blame others for whatever happened to us. Only fools blame others, be very clear. The wise ones never blame others; they blame only themselves.

Anyhow, this habit of making a choice actually comes from the concept of choosing between heaven and hell all the time. Society teaches us to always choose between heaven and hell. Right from childhood, the concept of heaven and hell is instilled in us. On this basic idea is built our idea of choosing in everything. If we can



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see everything as one Whole, then we will never feel compelled to choose. We will simply flow and whatever we do will be just a choiceless and natural way of flowing with Existence.

Many of us seek to give up material life in search of spiritual truth. For such people it seems like an obvious choice between what they think is a difficult life with spouse, children and possessions that precludes any possibility of finding ever lasting happiness, and a path that guarantees them eternal bliss.

This is like some people giving up their jobs because they do not like their boss. They move to another job and discover that they don't like that boss also! The problem is not with the boss but with themselves. If you have an inherent problem of getting along with people, wherever you go, the problem will follow you. The solution is not to change your jobs, but to change your attitude.

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For a moment, if you stop and think what the common factor between your various bosses was, you will realize that it was you! You were the commonality factor! All your bosses were made differently with different attitudes and different dispositions, yet you did not get along with any of them. Why? Because *your attitude* remained the same with every boss and there was an inherent problem in that attitude.

If you are intelligent, you will wake up to this truth, else you will create more and more

illusions about others to yourself and move about completely ignorant of your own shortcomings. After all, the others are not going to lose anything by you moving away from them; it is you who is the loser.

A small story:

Once, a disciple went to his Master's cottage and came out crying.

The disciple who was waiting outside asked him what the matter was.

The first disciple replied, 'I asked Master if I could smoke while meditating and he beat me up.'

The second one entered the Master's cottage and came out after a while laughing.

The first disciple was surprised and asked him, 'What happened? What did Master tell you?'

The second disciple replied, 'I asked Master if I could meditate while smoking! He praised me and sent me!'

Just see the different attitudes, which resulted in one disciple getting beaten and the other getting praised! The second disciple is the intelligent one who understands that everything can be done meditatively, that every moment can be a meditative moment, that everything is whole and integrated. Now don't think that I am advocating smoking as a meditation! Our people will correctly draw the wrong conclusion from



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what they hear. They will catch the words and miss the truth; that is the problem.

Just understand that the attitude with which we choose is important and not *what* we choose. If the attitude is right, then even if we choose to exclude certain things in our life, it will not be out of deliberate exclusion, it will be because we are simply flowing with the truth that's all. When this happens, we will not feel any misery. When the attitude is not right, we choose deliberately and end up excluding things deliberately and fall into deep misery.

With the right attitude, work becomes worship. With the wrong attitude, even worship becomes work. People go for vacation to exotic beaches and try to enjoy. But, if you carry the same mind, the same attitude of postponing enjoyment, the same attitude of compulsively choosing, how can you enjoy the vacation? You are always planning for the next moment and miss the present. If you are at work, you think about your evening plans at home. But, when you reach home, you are already caught up in worrying about the next day's work at office.

I always tell people, 'If you are worrying about your wife or children, you call it home. If you are worrying at office, you call it work. If you are worrying on the beach, you call it vacation! That is the only difference you are experiencing. You carry the same mind, then how can you change the experience?

You experience what you are, be very clear. Don't blame the place or people or circumstances around you. Even in the worst of situations, you can enjoy yourself, only if you are enjoyment yourself. If you are enjoyment yourself, you enjoy everything around you because you are enjoyment and you know to experience and exude only that. On the other hand, if you are misery and worry within, everything will seem miserable and worrisome to you. Whatever you are filled with inside is what you will experience outside. It has nothing to do with the outer world things.

In the case of the spiritual aspirant who deliberately excludes the material world to reach his spiritual goal, it is actually his attachment to material objects that leads him to take this decision. Even if he supposedly renounces the material world and becomes an ascetic, the attachment will follow him. He will continue to have the same fantasies, except that now he may be wearing saffron robes instead of other colors. Just by going to the Himalayas, you cannot give up the mind that is used to running after desires. What is needed is a change in the mental setup and the ability to handle yourself and your desires.

Desires cannot be overcome by suppression. If you fast for a day, be very clear, you will dream of food that night. If you are suppressing sexual desires, you will start dreaming of it all night. On the other hand, you can never be satisfied



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by madly going behind them either. All you can do is be aware of your desires. Bring them to your awareness so that you are not driven by your unconscious desires and desires borrowed from others. Awareness is the key to fall in tune with all your decisions. Then, things will happen automatically.

There is no need to choose between a material life of pleasure and spiritual satisfaction through renunciation. They are both perfectly possible to achieve together, as they can and do coexist. It is not required to exclude deliberately out of a feeling of compulsion.

A small story from the Mahabharata:

A young sage gets up from his morning prayers and goes out of his hut.

A passing crane's droppings foul him.

In great anger the sage looks up and burns the crane by just the power of his look.

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Proud of his newfound spiritual powers, he walks to the nearest house and begs for food, as is his routine everyday.

The lady of the house is serving her husband and makes him wait.

When she comes out to give him food, he stares at her in irritation.

The lady replies, 'Do you think I am a crane that you can burn with just your stare?'

He was startled that the lady knew about what had happened in the forest to which there had been no witness other than him and the crane; he asks her how she knew what had happened.

She tells him to go to a person in the nearby town who would explain.

After a long search, the curious sage ends up at the town butcher.

The butcher asks the sage whether the housewife sent him.

The sage is startled again and asks the butcher how both he and the lady knew things that only the sage knew.

The butcher explains to the chastened sage that they both focused on their day-to-day duties, which they performed to the best of their ability and the mere performance of their duties had made both of them enlightened!

To be enlightened, one does not have to choose between material and spiritual life. Leading a material life also leads to enlightenment. All one has to do is to live in the present with no regrets about the past and no speculations about the future.

Life is all about living with existence and in balance. People ask me, 'It is still difficult for us to understand how to be both in material and spiritual lives. They seem to be contradictory.'



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Understand this: First of all, there is nothing called 'material' or 'spiritual'. Life itself is meant to be only spiritual. Spirituality is nothing but living life to its optimum, centered within. Infusing spirit into life is spirituality! So there is no question of material and spiritual. Whatever you do has to be infused with spirit, with spirituality, that's all. This is what is Quantum Spirituality.

In science, before the concept of quantum physics was accepted, there was a conflict between the concepts of matter and energy. Though Einstein had postulated the relationship between matter and energy clearly, that matter and energy are inter-convertible, one group said, 'Both energy and matter exist, but in different space and time.' That was the first theory.

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Soon, another group of scientists came up with the second theory and disagreed with the first

and said, 'Both energy and matter are in the same space but at different times'.

After some time, a third theory was proposed that said, 'Both energy and matter exist in the same space and at the same time; there is no boundary between the two.' This was the final theory.

Once this was accepted, the conflict disappeared. It was agreed that matter and energy exist together in time and space. There

is now a concept of singularity, of the simultaneous existence of matter and energy. The concept is that, at the same point in time it can be matter and energy, depending on perception. There are other theories like the string theory that further confirm this non-duality of existence. The concept of singularity or non-duality is where the mind cannot penetrate, one that is beyond matter and energy.

One of the principles in quantum physics, Heisenberg's uncertainty principle states that both the position and the velocity of an electron cannot be determined accurately at the same time because the very act of measurement changes the observation. They call this the 'observers' paradox'. This led to the principle of superposition according to which, while we do not know what the state of an object is, it is actually in all possible states simultaneously, as long as we don't check it. The measurement *itself* causes the object to be limited to a single possibility. That is the reason when Einstein was asked how energy becomes matter and matter become energy, he replied, 'Here ends Science and starts Spirituality.' The first line of the *Isa Vasya Upanishad* says, '*Isa Vasyam idam sarvam*' – all that exists is Energy.

As long as you feel you need to live two different lives, material and spiritual, you are only playing with words. In material life, you are in search of satisfaction of desires. It is not



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just basic needs that you wish to fulfill, but also the wants that arise out of greed.

It is certain that we can fulfill our genuine needs. It is our *wants* that never get fulfilled because they are increasing all the time. Mahatma Gandhi, the founding father of India says, 'We have enough to fulfill the whole world's needs. But, the whole world cannot fulfill one man's wants.'

In Jainism, there is a truth that its founder Mahavira states, 'When you come down to planet Earth, the total amount of food which you will eat is sent with you. The energy needed to fulfill all your desires is given to you.'

The problem is that: after coming down to planet Earth, you start seeing what others are enjoying, and you start picking up desires from others. You not only want to work out *your* desires, but you start gathering the desires of others as well.

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For example, you go to the mall to buy a refrigerator.

There, you meet a friend who is buying a color TV and oven.

Just a few moments before you met your friend, you were very happy buying just the refrigerator.

However, now, your mind will start working on the color TV also.

You start thinking about it in your mind. You feel you should also have the color TV.

So instead of buying just the refrigerator, you end up taking a loan and buying the color TV as well.

But what happens after you buy it? It seems like just another possession along with your hundred other possessions and the mind is racing behind something else, like the new car that your neighbor has bought or the new air cooler that your relative has bought!

Bhagavan Ramana Maharishi says beautifully, 'Till you possess it, even a mustard seed will seem like a mountain. After possessing it, even a mountain will seem like a mustard seed.' Such is the power and the nature of the mind that it can completely change the way you look at anything.

Wants are ever rising and can never be fulfilled. Wants create dissatisfaction both in terms of reviewing the past and jumping to the future. Real life, on the other hand, is all about the present.

What we do is, we think of normal material life as a horizontal line and spiritual life as a vertical line. Then we think of choosing between following the horizontal line or the vertical line; we choose between the horizontal material life and the vertical spiritual life. Only when you



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understand that you can travel both horizontally and vertically and in fact explode in all directions simultaneously do you understand that there are no contradictions in life. Till then, you will always have the conflict of which kind of life to live and how.

You may ask me, 'How can we travel in the vertical and horizontal directions simultaneously?'

To most people, material life represents all that they have in life - physical, emotional, economic and intellectual things which do not bring them the deep satisfaction that they are looking for. They feel that they have achieved all that they wanted to achieve but *what for* they achieved them, they have missed! On the contrary, spiritual life appears to be the greener grass that beckons, that they do not have and which seems to have all that is missing from their current lives. By giving up one for the other, they seek happiness, peace of mind and bliss.

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Spirituality is actually not any greener grass that you need to choose to achieve deep satisfaction. It is Life *itself!* The greatest misconception about spirituality is that it is an option! Be very clear: Spirituality is Life Engineering and it is life itself. Spirituality implies that you are physically and mentally healthy and sound, that your relationships are happy, and that you live in awareness and spontaneity. It ensures that at no stage are you

bound to your own self and family; the whole world becomes your family, your responsibility; compassion arises for all, not merely when and where it is of value to you. This is the state that Lord Krishna refers to as 'Vasudeva Kutumbaha', the Universal Family, where you are one with everyone.

Once I asked a person who used to drink regularly why he stopped drinking.

He replied that he wanted to go to heaven.

He had read that in heaven, you get *soma rasa* - drink of the Gods! So, he gave up drinking in this world in the hope of getting to drink in heaven.

I told him, 'Never give up some thing on the basis of greed. Give up only on the basis of understanding. What is the guarantee that you will get *soma rasa* after death?'

Now I tell you, if you give up anything based on greed, you will never get *soma rasa* in heaven!

If you drop things in the hope of pleasures of the other worlds, remember it is still the same greed playing tricks on you. Look into your life deeply. In how many cases is your greed hidden by the beautiful words you use to describe it?

Just look at the faces of the people who torture themselves in the name of attaining liberation. There will not be a trace of joy in them! That is



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not the way it is to be. It is not they have gone beyond greed either. They have simply shifted their greed from the so-called material world to the so-called spiritual world, that's all. They are still driven by greed only.

If desires drop on their own, it is a different thing. The scale of measure is this. If you are happy and fulfilled in doing what you are doing, without feeling that you are missing something, you are doing well, that's all. As long as you keep forcing yourself to do things that leave a deep void in you even after doing it, you will never experience that happiness and fulfillment in you. So never choose and force yourself. Try to embrace everything until you settle down with the things that give you deep fulfillment without causing yearning.

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When this settling happens within you, you will be able to support your actions with tremendous conviction and surety. Even if the whole world stands against you, you will be able to stand by your stance because it is out of your own deep experience and not mere intellect. The danger comes in when, without desires dropping on their own, you try to take up a stance of renunciation. Then, you will find that you don't have enough conviction and strength to go through it.

By its very nature, the mind hankers after more and more. It keeps driving you with the illusion that your desires will give you joy tomorrow.

This very hope makes you run behind tomorrow without living the present fully. Tomorrow will also come to you as today only. You really have only this one moment, the current moment to live. Even two moments cannot come together; it is only the single current moment that you have. Understand that.

For example, when you are young, you yearn to settle abroad thinking that life there will be good.

When you get there, it may not be as nice as you thought it would be, but you start working to buy a nice house thinking that it will give you the happiness you were seeking.

Once you have bought the house, you will think that if you get married and have a wife, real happiness will be yours, and you get married.

Then you feel that if you have kids, you will experience real happiness, and you have kids.

Finally you would have reached the end of your life and you will think that you will be happy only when you are able to retire with money.

However, by the time you retire, the mental setup you have created to continuously run behind tomorrow would have become a habit.

You would have actually forgotten how to enjoy life!





Relaxation is only a word for you, not an experience. Naturally, you have lost the sensitivity to live life fully, the quality of enjoying life.

It is like selling your eyes to purchase a beautiful painting, selling your sleep to buy a bed or selling your life to purchase a house!

A small story:

There was once a poor farmer who had lost all his wealth and land.

He was praying to God to help him get back some land, in which he could grow some crops and make a living.

On hearing his fervent prayers, God appeared before him and asked him what he wanted.

The man asked God for a few acres of land upon which he could do farming for a living.

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God took pity on him and granted him a boon, saying, 'Whatever land you can cover by foot from sunrise to sunset tomorrow will become yours.'

The man was overjoyed and couldn't sleep the whole of that night. He waited the whole night impatiently for the sun to rise, so that he could start walking. At the break of dawn, he set out to cover the land that would become his.

He walked a few miles and covered the land that he had originally wanted for himself.

He then remembered the scriptural saying that every man should leave enough possessions for three generations. This thought made him walk further.

By noon, he had enough land to last many generations. He still felt dissatisfied. He was now keen to be the biggest landowner in the region and walked on.

By now it was well past noon, the sun was scorching his skin and he was extremely thirsty and hungry.

But, he did not want to waste even a single moment by taking rest or stopping to eat, since he would lose that much of precious land.

He continued walking further.

After a few hours, his body was begging for some food and water. But he wanted to cover just a few more miles, so that no one he knew could match the extent of land he owned.

In the distance, he saw a burial ground and a river flowing beyond it. He was very happy at the thought of having a river in his possession and a place where he and his progeny could be buried comfortably.

He refused to heed to his body's desperate pleas for rest and food and decided that he would stop only after he had crossed the burial ground and reached the river.



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Just as the sun was about to set, he reached the river.

Desperately thirsty, he bent down to sip some water.

The moment his lips touched the water, he dropped dead!

The man had managed to acquire miles and miles of land but in the end, all he could really use was the six feet of land in the burial ground that he was finally buried in!

Running behind the future can never be life; it is just slow death. When you jump from the worries about the past to the fear of the future, you are just like a scorpion-stung monkey that keeps jumping around from one place to another not knowing what to do.

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You see, desires are the only things that sustain life for us, no doubt. The moment you wake up, the first thing that gets you out of bed is desire. If you sit and think, you will understand what I am saying. Desire is the first thought that gets you out of bed. Either you think of some pending work or some office deadline or some help that a person needs from you or some thing else. But as long as these desires are mere needs and not wants, it is all right. The problem is, over time, our wants and needs get mixed up and we lose our clarity on what we really need.

Once your borrowed desires start dropping, you will find that all the energy that you invested in

fulfilling them is now available to do a lot more things. You will also experience liberation. By liberation, I mean living a liberated life while you are alive, free at the level of the being. That is the real liberation. After your death, getting liberated is alright, but while you live you should feel liberated, that is the essence of life.

What is the point in living a heavy life? People make fun of spiritualists saying that they are torturing themselves while living and therefore losing out on real living. This is because, first of all, these so called spiritualists portray a wrong picture of spirituality to others. They follow rigorous discipline and appear tortured as a result of that. They appear neither liberated nor happy in any way. Unfortunately these people are taken as the hallmark to brand spirituality.

Real spirituality is allowing yourself to flower out of worldly things and then using the same things to enjoy, without any attachment. When you are rich inside, you will be able to live with or without comforts, with or without material things. And whichever way you live, you will shine with a brilliance incomprehensible to people. That is the real fragrance of spirituality.

So understand, when you are haunted by all the borrowed desires, you will feel heavy and dissatisfied all the time. When you start coming out of it, you will feel light and blissful.



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Enlightened Masters have no desires as such. All their energy that was earlier in base emotions like anger, sex and greed becomes pure energy and compassion. That is why they are able to handle such masses of people, attending to each one's needs without tiring. Unless the energy is pure compassion, this is just not possible. Can an ordinary person handle millions of people's worries and anxieties at the same time? Even if he has a service oriented mind? Only pure energy can do it.

Just by the fact that a single person is able to handle practically the whole world's problems you can conclude that the person is enlightened. It can be no other way.

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It is perfectly possible to groom ourselves to be without desires, fear, guilt, and all such emotions, because, anyway, they are just a play of our mind. The big problem in our lives is that we never try to be without these. We never try these ideas in our life – ideas that suggest that we can live without such emotions. Even before they enter our system, we have some arguments to destroy them. If we are really interested in living a life free from worry and fear, we will try to create a space within us where these ideas can take root and grow to become an experiential reality in us.

We are happy feeding on these ideas, but staying as we are. We keep on going between the past and future. Seeking the past and future

itself arises out of desire. Seeking itself is desire! Seeking itself means moving from where you are! But life has to do only with the present moment. So seeking is really a means of moving away from the present.

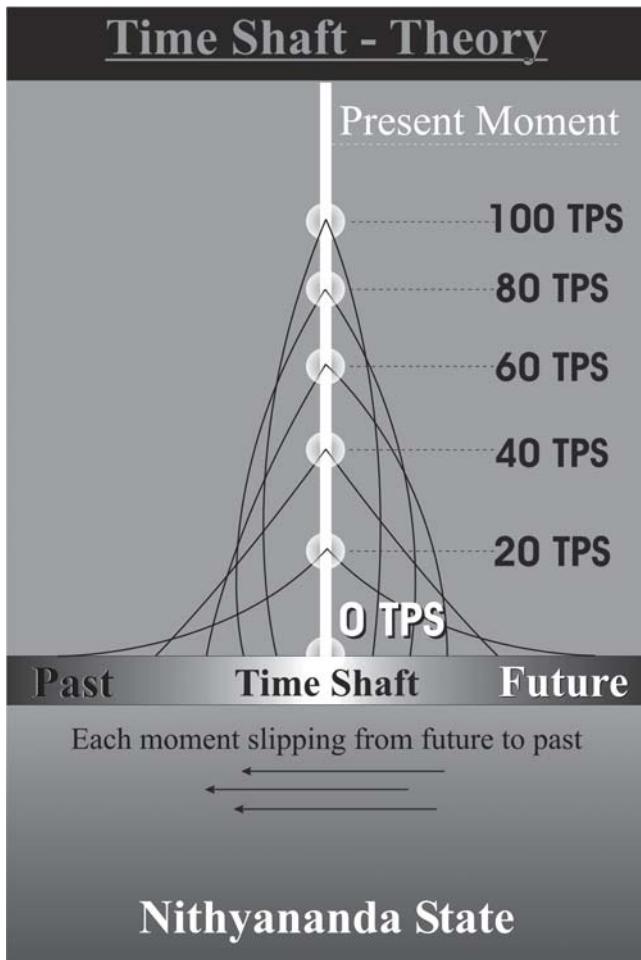
When you are in the present, in the here and now, you are actually in a no-thought zone. This is what is called the 'Zero TPS state'; TPS is 'thoughts per second'. This is the state of *Samadhi*, *Satori*, *Nithyananda* state, Enlightenment, Salvation or whatever you call it. You will have complete awareness and total consciousness but you will not have any thoughts.

It has been researched and found that we use hardly 10% of our mental capacity and we see just 2% of what is actually present in our surroundings. This is because we are never in the present moment; we are either worrying about the future or regretting the past. So, all our energy is absorbed in these wasteful thoughts and we don't see what is happening in the 'now'. Every thought has something to do with either the past or the future, in some way. Sometimes the connection with the past or future is so subtle that it will be difficult even to perceive.



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Just take a look at this diagram here:



BLISS IS THE GOAL AND THE PATH

The vertical shaft in the center represents the Thoughts per Second or TPS. The horizontal axis has the past on the left of the shaft, the future on the right of the shaft. The present is at the point where the vertical axis touches the horizontal axis. At any given time, the greater one's TPS or 'thoughts per second' is, the farther away one is from consciousness of the present moment. You keep moving from the past to the future very rapidly without even getting a glimpse of the glorious present.

When your TPS comes down, or when your number of thoughts per second is low, when you are more relaxed, you enter more and more into the present. When this shift happens, you have a clearer vision of the past and the future as indicated in the diagram, instead of just skidding in and out of the past and future. When this happens, familiar incidents from even past births and intuitions of the future will start to surface in you.

Also, when your TPS is low, you are one with Existence; you have touched base.

Let me relate to you an incident that happened in the ashram:

While walking in the ashram one day, I saw a snake lying in front of me on the path.

I was just watching it for some time and it was oblivious to my presence and continued to stay there as if I was not present.



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After a few seconds, I noticed that the snake suddenly moved as if sensing some presence.

I saw that there was a man behind me and both the man and the snake were terrified and the snake moved away sensing the presence of the man.

What happened was, there was no 'I' consciousness in me since I am in a zone of no-mind where there are no thoughts. Since there was no 'I' consciousness in me, there was no 'you' consciousness in the snake! Only when the consciousness of 'I' happens in you, the sense of 'you' happens in the other party. When you are in the present and zero TPS zone, you are one with Existence; your presence does not cause fear in others to raise their self-defense to protect themselves from you. But with the man behind me, there was an intense 'I' consciousness when he saw the snake and this induced the snake to get the strong 'you' feeling and it got frightened and moved away in defence.

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Anyhow, there are moments when your TPS comes down unconsciously. When this happens to you without your consciously attempting it, be very clear, for those few moments, your TPS has dropped and you are more in the present. When your TPS is actually zero, you can clearly see the entire past and future. When people experience a feeling of *déjà vu*, they have actually dropped accidentally into a near-zero TPS state. This is also the reason why

enlightened Masters can clearly see the past and the future.

The mind enslaves you into believing that you can only travel in one way, horizontally or vertically, spiritually or materially. That is why you do not grow in many spiritual practices that force you to choose between the two, material or spiritual.

Instead of two axes, you can have multiple axes, infinite axes that offer infinite possibilities in the past, present and future, as well as across all points in space. Being in the 'here and now' helps transcend barriers of time and space so that one can be everywhere at all times.

This phenomenon of singularity, that Hindu scriptures call *Brahman*, Buddhists call *akasic record* and which is generally referred to as Universal Consciousness, refers to the state of penetration of the time shaft at which point one is simultaneously in the past, present and future.

This is also the state of enlightenment, as the ego or mind breaks down at this point. It is an explosion within one's mind that is multidimensional in time and space, in the total absence of thoughts.

To reach this state, all one has to do is to stay in the present and suspend wasteful thoughts of



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past and future. As for the present, just focus on what you are doing at that time. For any other activity, you need some talent and potential. For example, to be a Picasso, you need the talent of a painter; to be a Mozart, you need to have the talent of music. But, to get enlightened, all you need to do is to be alive! As long as you are a human being and alive, you are qualified to be enlightened.

Buddhism refers to the enlightened state as the 'mindful' state. Buddhist meditation techniques such as *vipassana* seek to introduce us to this state of mindfulness, which is the state of the present, of the here and now. Most of us are not involved fully in what we do. When we eat, we do everything else but focus on the food. We talk, watch the television, or read books paying little attention to the food that we eat.

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Vipassana is a beautiful breathing technique by which awareness is infused into us and we come to the present easily. In fact, *vipassana* can be applied to our habits to get rid of them. You see, all habits are because of our unconscious state. We know that a habit is bad for health. Intellectually, we know it. We have read in all possible books, magazines, told by friends and relatives, seen it happening to our own friends, people dying due to excessive consumption of alcohol, but what happens? Although we know all this, the moment we think of drinks, we get a sudden inspiration to drink and we go ahead! All our so-called clarity

simply fails us. The desire to drink simply blinds and overtakes us.

A small story:

A man got hit on the road by a car and he was carried to the pavement and whisked into a car.

The person who took charge of him yelled to someone outside, 'Get him a drink, quick.'

The man opened his blurry eyes and enquired, 'How serious do I have to be to get a Scotch?'

You see, our unconscious is so powerful! It simply overrules and overtakes us.



If we are with intense awareness, we can never be victim to these habits. Because of a lack of awareness, we do these things. Just try to do this simple exercise. When you drink the next time, instead of gulping down the liquor, just play with it; taste it; sip it slowly, taste every drop before it goes down; look at your body's reaction to it; feel the change in your body as the liquor passes through it.

If you drink just once in this fashion, you will see that your desire to drink reduces tremendously and the habit may even leave you after a couple of times.

We are so caught in our unconscious ways; awareness is totally missing and so we keep doing the same mistakes over and over again, blindly, with no sensitivity. If you act with

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awareness, all the unwanted habits will simply drop; you don't have to struggle to drop them.

A small story:

A king once went to a Zen Master and asked him, 'Master, I have heard that you always live with joy and bliss. What is the technique that you use?'

The Master replied, 'I eat when I eat. I sleep when I sleep.'

The king was confused and asked the Master, 'Do we also not do the same thing?'

The Master replied, 'Surely not. When you eat, are you really eating? You plan about the future and worry about the past. When you eat, totally eat. When you sleep, totally sleep. Then, your whole life will become worship.'

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We do things mechanically. We do things with our mind, never with our body. Even eating and drinking we do with our mind – it is a kind of cerebral enjoyment. Our body is actually more existential than our mind. Our mind is a myth – a mere collection of thoughts. If you are able to free yourself from thoughts, your mind is no longer there! But your body is real. Even for great Masters who are in the state of no mind, their body continues to be real.

So, do things with your body, with awareness. Then you become total and not cerebral. When you do things with great awareness you become

total. You become what you are doing. When you eat totally, you become the eating. When you laugh totally, you become the laughter. When you can become something totally, you are actually touching base with yourself, not with your mind.

The mind is the most superficial thing ever, but we have empowered it and kept it as a deep phenomenon; that is the problem.

When you become total, you are integrated; you are not fragmented. When you are fragmented, all the fragments in you simply cause chaos. But you have always been taught to be fragments, because only if you are fragments you are easy to handle by society. If you are integrated, society can't do much with you. It cannot play its mind games on you.

So, stay in the present in whatever you do. When you take the next step, when you brush your teeth, when you smile at some one, just focus on what you are doing at that point in time. If other thoughts fleet by, witness them as an observer without getting involved. These thoughts will die down by themselves. As thoughts slow down and gradually disappear, you near the time shaft interface. When all thoughts are suspended, you are in the time shaft, with the entire time frame of past to future available in front of you.

At this point, there is no past; at this point, the future is known; even as you focus only on the



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present, you are aware of the future. Therefore, what you decide to do in the present is with complete awareness of what the future entails; you develop powers of intuition and omniscience.

You are what the scriptures call a *trikala jnani*: one who knows all the three time zones, of the past, present and future, one for whom the universe holds no secrets. You are actually a Master of the Universe.

Patanjali, the father of the Yoga system declares, 'When you are inspired by some great purpose, some extraordinary project, your mind transcends limitations, your consciousness expands in every direction and you feel yourself in a new, great and wonderful world. Suddenly, dormant forces, faculties and talents within you become alive and you discover yourself to be a greater person than you ever dreamed yourself to be.'

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You have the potential to be infinite. But the mind plays its games. I tell you: You are not human beings waiting for a divine experience; you are divine beings with a human experience!

But the mind is the most wonderful magician. It simply makes up what you perceive as reality based on the desires that you have. Your desires are the food for your mind and as long as you feed it, it will keep dishing out realities the way you want them. That is why, what was a burning desire one moment will suddenly seem

not so important when it is achieved and you would have moved to another desire, to another fantasy.

Just like how children play with sandcastles, the mind makes us play. The only difference is, children enjoy their games as they are playing for the sake of playing. If you watch them, you will see that they meticulously build a big stack of cards and the next moment, they will just pull a card from it and bring down the whole stack in no time! They don't brood or regret that they took so long to build the stack and it is all gone now; they know it is a game and enjoy it totally. On the other hand, we take all our mind games seriously, forgetting that we are the ones who started the game and playing it.

Once we understand that the mind is a myth that makes things look real, we can start liberating ourselves from it. But somehow, although we know this intellectually, we don't take steps towards coming out of it. We find comfort in getting entangled in our mind. We simply escape facing reality and end up complaining about our miseries.

We conduct *chakra* meditation camps where seven meditation techniques are taught one for each *chakra* or energy center in our body.

In these camps, people tell me that they wish to do all the seven meditations for the seven *chakras* everyday in their house.



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I tell them to do one to start with and focus on that one; but they insist they want to do all.

So I tell them to go ahead.

After a few months, if I see them in the ashram and ask them if they are practicing the meditation techniques, they tell me, 'I am hoping to start soon but I am unable to find the time!'

We have no problem in giving appointments to other people for our time. But when it comes to giving ourselves an appointment, we have a serious problem.

We are all the time in a hurry when it comes to doing worship or meditation. And even if we meditate or worship, we look at our watches all the time and find short cuts in what we are doing. We will have a hundred other things to think about that distract us whenever we sit down to meditate.

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A small story:

A man sat down to meditate.

He had barely closed his eyes when the maid walked in with noisy anklets.

He immediately opened his eyes and screamed at her for disturbing his meditation.

The next day, he sat down to meditate again.

This time again the maid walked in but tiptoed in making very little noise. But still, the man opened his eyes and screamed at her for disturbing him.

The third day, the man sat down to meditate and waited to hear the sound of the anklets!

We are all like this! We are ever-ready to blame external factors for distracting us.

People feel they should go to the Himalayas for meditation. 'What for' I ask? Because the Himalayas offer a silent atmosphere. No doubt, the Himalayas carry a vibrant silence in them, but what is the use? You carry your same noisy mind there too! Be very clear, distractions are distractions only as long as you feel they are distractions. Just fall in tune with them; they will no longer be distractions, that's all.

If you go to the Himalayas and meditate, you might be able to meditate better; but remember, the silence is not your own. It is the silence of the Himalayas. Meditation is discovering the silence within you; it is discovering the emptiness in you; it is going beyond your mind and body and experiencing that you are one with Existence.

Silence is actually a great virtue, but the most difficult to follow. We are taught to talk and talk and talk. So much so, if we stop talking for even a few hours, people think we are ill, or



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something has gone wrong with us! People can never feel the beauty of silence. Of course, the silence that we radiate should be a live silence, not a dead silence. Understand, we are not talking about the silence that we experience because something went wrong or we are angry or we are exhausted. All that is silence with a reason, with a negative reason most often.

Most often, our silence is because of some negative reason. We may be silent when we are watching the television or listening to music or carrying on a silent fight with someone, or because we have had enough for the day. This silence is not what we are looking at. The real silence is that which happens on its own, as a result of a deep fulfillment at the being level. When the fulfillment happens at the being level, there will be no need to express through words.

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Most of our talk, most of our words are some kind of a gibberish. We talk to escape from ourselves, from the deep silence hidden within us, of which we are strangely afraid; which is too intense for us to take because we have never been allowed to experience it, we have always been kept busy in one way or the other, away from it. We have felt glimpses of it but felt it to be very strange because it is unknown territory. When we are young, society keeps us busy and when we grow older we master the art of keeping ourselves busy so that we are comfortably cushioned from the inner silence.

People come to me with guilt. I give them some ideas to come out of it. They insist on learning meditation. I give them some meditation technique. After a month, if I ask them if they have done it, they say no and they carry one more guilt feeling, of not doing that meditation!

We only wish to *try* to transform; we really do not wish to transform; yet, we would like to loudly proclaim our wish to transform. This is what I call holiday religion. We practice part time spirituality. It is just skin deep for us. And at the end of it, we are filled with more hypocrisy and guilt.

This is like saying that you are trying to read but don't actually read. Can you try to read? Either you read or not, isn't it?! How can you *try* to read? What does that mean? It means that you are just cheating yourself. You can't cheat others by saying these things. They are not going to be cheated anyway. You are the one who is really cheated.

Even a meditation becomes a ritual if it is restricted to one part of your life at one time in a given space. Meditation is not a quantity that is to be added to your life; it is a quality that needs to be built into your life.

If this is understood, meditation can become an enjoyable way of life. The quality that meditation can add to your life is phenomenal. It can bring in such an acute awareness in you



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that you will find your performance in the outer world that much more intense and awe-inspiring. It can make you aware of such nuances that you will start understanding the small things that actually add quality to life versus your earlier ideas about the grosser things. What any amount of intellectual build up cannot do to you, basic attitudinal changes and meditation can do to you.

The mind and your conditioning trick you into thinking that meditation and spirituality are arduous tasks. You always think that you have to practice for a long time and only then you can expect a quiet mind. This puts you off from even entering into it. But, how can you do anything about the future when all you have in your control is the present? The present is what decides the future.

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The attitude of accepting and welcoming the present as it is, will lead you to this new dimension through a quantum leap. Postponing in the name of the future will just take you on the same road that you have been traveling all along. Only thing now, your target has changed from material things to meditation!

Anything that you ever did or that was done to you in the past cannot prevent you from saying yes to what 'is' and taking your attention deeply into the 'now'. If you say that it is preventing you from jumping into the now, it only means that you are allowing it to influence you. It

means that you are comfortable in remaining with your conditioning without allowing growth to happen in you.

A small story:

A young girl walked into the lawyer's office.

She wanted a divorce from her husband.

The lawyer asked her, 'On what grounds are you applying for a divorce?'

The girl replied, 'Desertion.'

The lawyer looked at the baby she was carrying in her arms.

The girl quickly spoke, 'Well, now and then he does come home to discuss things and establish peace.'

Just look at this! This is what happens with most of us. We allow things to go wrong and then maintain the blame on the usual things in life, that is, the past and the future. Be very clear, nothing from your past and none of the circumstances can influence you if you are centered on the present alone.

There is no starting point in worldly life; there is no end point in spiritual life. Enlightenment is not an end; it is a new beginning. An ultimate experience is not the last experience. It is just the greatest experience till that point in time.

Some one asked me, 'We feel so blissful after the meditation camps. How do we retain the





bliss of the meditation program?' The moment you wish to retain the bliss, you are choosing out of deep ignorance; the bliss will escape from you. It is just like water flowing in a river; it stays in your open palms as long as you have your hands open. The moment you want to possess the water and try to hold it, it escapes!

Bliss is like a breeze. You can simply enjoy the breeze that is already there. You can neither create it yourself nor can you possess it. It is there, you are there as a part of it, immersed in it, that's all. So it is with bliss too. That is the real property of bliss. When you understand this, you will understand that although meditation camps can help show you what bliss is, it is actually there within you and there is no need to try to possess it.

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It has been said that you can never step into the same river twice because the moment you step in once, the water has flown, so the river is not the same when you step in the second time. But I tell you now: You cannot step into the same river even once! When the sole of your foot touched the surface of the river, the river was in a particular state. When your foot was halfway down the river, the water that you touched before has already flown. When your foot touches the bed of the river, the water that is flowing over your leg is different again because more water has flown! The river is continuously flowing!

This is how bliss is. It is continuously happening. You can never possess bliss. *Bliss* will possess you!

Let me tell you an incident from my own life:

When I was twelve, I was playing with this technique of just watching where thoughts came from. I didn't even know that it was a meditation at that time. On the foothills of *Arunachala hills*, in my hometown of Tiruvannamalai in South India, I was sitting on a rock, just practicing this technique that I had been practicing for a long time.

Suddenly, something happened; something opened. I felt as if I was being pulled inside. Suddenly, I could see 360 degrees in all directions. I could see everything in front of me, behind me, to my right even without looking to the right and to the left even without looking to the left. Not just that, I felt that whatever I was seeing was all *me*! It was such an ecstatic experience; it was so intense. It was three to four hours before I could open my eyes. I felt an intense fever of bliss that lasted for three days.

Then slowly, tremendous fear gripped me. I began to think that some ghost had possessed me and that was the reason I was able to have the 360-degree vision. An elderly spiritual lady who used to look after me at that time told me, 'You are not possessed by a ghost, you are possessed by God.'



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For six months, I was so afraid of the experience that I did not meditate. I was afraid even to close my eyes. I never even went back to that rock. I would walk miles out of my way to avoid having to pass by it.

Then one day, I told my experience to my friend and even proved it to him by asking him to place a coin behind my head and telling him if it was showing heads or tails. At first he laughed; then, after a few times, he became afraid. I told him all that was happening behind my back. He was terrified. He made an excuse to leave and never came back! I was pulled to go back to that rock at times. I reasoned it out to myself, 'Even if it was a ghost, it was so blissful, maybe it is not so bad.' But the fear kept me from going to it again.

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After this experience, nine years of intense *tapas* (*spiritual practice*) followed, just to get the experience again. When it finally happened, my body and mind were ready and the experience never left.

Actually, I was in supreme bliss when I had my first spiritual experience at the age of twelve. But the problem was, I wanted to possess it; I wanted to possess what had happened and that was what drove me to the nine years of spiritual practice. Finally, I was so frustrated at the futility of all the intense physical and mental spiritual practices that I had been following for nine years and I dropped the very

idea of enlightenment. When I let go and relaxed, when I dropped the idea of enlightenment, of possessing it, it possessed me!

Seven days after my giving up the intense practices, on the banks of the sacred river Narmada, when I was just enjoying nature's beauty, my thoughts stilled and I reached the zero TPS state and attained the state of Eternal Bliss or *Nithyananda*.

People ask what they have to renounce to be spiritual. I tell them, 'Do not renounce what you have; renounce what you do not have.'

They are shocked when they hear me say this. They are unable to understand what I mean. What I mean is, renounce all the illusions that you are harboring which is not really you! Renounce what you are not! When you are with your wife, don't allow Ms. Universe to come in between! When you have a home, don't allow a fantasy home that you saw in the magazine cover to come in between. Enjoy what you have; it is yours. You don't have to renounce it. Just renounce what you don't have, that is enough. It is those things that you don't have that cause trouble to you.

The problem is, these so-called spiritualists have established that it is a sin to enjoy material things, things that we have with us. I always tell my disciples that they will enjoy the best of the Western and Eastern worlds when they are



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with me and I ensure that also. I tell them to take care of their personal appearance, wear beautiful clothes, flaunt themselves in a beautiful way – after all God has created each one in a unique mould. The least we can do is flaunt ourselves as a mark of respect to God's creation.

They need not dress up vulgarly to flaunt themselves, but they should enjoy themselves as wonderful creations of God, they should have a certain pride about being a wonderful creation of Existence. It is not a sin to dress well and enjoy life. We *have* it, so we are enjoying it. What is wrong? Life is there to enjoy, not to suffer under pseudo morality and pseudo conscience. It is there to explore and enjoy with innocence and freshness.

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Very often you find that people who enjoy themselves not out of ego but just out of being comfortable with themselves, have a certain innocence in them; a certain infectious joy radiates from them. On the contrary, people who think it is a sin to flaunt what they have will be repressed and oppressed, and will suffer from low self-esteem and a deep sorrow.

The problem is, as I said earlier, we have been trained to choose all the time. That is why these questions arise. Especially perfectionists like to choose all the time. They feel so compelled to choose. Understand: Life is not perfect, only death is. One who does not make mistakes, or believes he or she makes no mistakes does not

respect others. Do not try to be perfect; do not choose. If you avoid mistakes and try becoming a perfectionist, you will end up making the biggest blunder of wasting this gift of life without fully living it.

Life is a fulfillment only when you live it totally, not when you live it as a perfectionist. When you are perfect, you are as good as dead. When you are total, you are fulfilled every moment and the tasks that you perform will also carry the fragrance of it and will also appear total.

Perfectionists are narrow in their thinking, in their vision. In their chosen field or chosen task, they try to achieve perfectionism. There is a lot that they exclude in this whole process; they miss the very spirit of life. They see life through a very limited scope. Today, everything has become so specialized in all the fields.

In engineering companies, each one specializes and works in a very narrow area of work, am I right? Similarly, in the field of medicine also, specialists have become very common.

One man went to the doctor with burning pain in his leg.

The doctor saw him and asked, 'Which leg is causing you pain?'

The patient replied, 'My right leg doctor.'

The doctor said, 'Oh! Sorry, I specialize only in left legs.'



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This is how everything has become; limited, narrow. You are useful to society when you specialize, no doubt. But your perception itself becomes narrow. This is not the way it is meant to be. Life is so expansive; it is all encompassing. It needs to be drunk. But the problem is, we are so caught in the material world. We have forgotten that the whole purpose of life is to drink it and flower.

In Sanskrit, there is a beautiful word called *Maya*, which means illusion. Philosophers say that the world is just an illusion. We find it very difficult to accept this. How can we believe that what we see, touch, feel is just an illusion when there is a physical reality to it?

A small story:

Once, a philosopher was explaining to a man that the whole world is just an illusion.

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The man got angry thinking that the philosopher was just trying to fool him into thinking that what he could see with his eyes and feel with his touch was all his hallucination.

He picked up a stone and threw it at the philosopher's foot.

The philosopher shrieked in pain.

The man retorted, 'Why are you yelling? Isn't this world just an illusion? How are you then feeling pain?'

The concept of illusion has to be clearly understood. What we see is difficult to accept as illusion. That is why, in the East, we have a term to describe this: *Maya*. *Ya ma iti maya*: that which is not there but which disturbs you as if it is there is *maya*. We do not see reality as it is but we see it through our lens of past and future. We associate the reality with our past and extrapolate the future from it. We are not able to view it in an unbiased fashion.

Just like how the sky is untouched by the clouds moving in front of it, in the same way, your true Self is untouched and separate from your body or mind or thoughts. It is something beyond these. *Maya* makes you believe that you are just the body or the mind. It limits the true and eternal You to the ephemeral body and the transient mind.

The *Paramahansa Upanishad*, one of the Hindu scriptures that defines the qualities of an enlightened Master says, 'What is the state of the illumined man? All selfish attachments have dropped from him. He lives his life for the welfare of all. He faces heat and cold, pleasure and pain, honor and dishonor with equal calm. Free from the sway of doubt and false knowledge, he lives united with the Lord of Love. Entering the non-dual state, he attains the goals of evolution.'

When you are under the sway of illusion it does not mean that the world itself is an illusion. It



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means that what you see is illusory because what you see is different from reality; what you see is a mere projection of your mind and your mind is only a collection of thoughts, which in turn is a collection of deductions based on past happenings and ideas instilled in you by others. This is what is meant by illusion.

What you create with your mind, with your set of instilled beliefs causes you to see the world in a particular way. That is the illusion that you are experiencing. Each one experiences things in their own way, through their own illusion. That is why although the world is the same, people's experience of it differs. Each one has his or her own illusory view of life. Illusion or *Maya* has to be understood in this fashion.

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All forms of duality, such as pain or pleasure, happiness or joy, are projections of this illusion. That is why an enlightened person who is believed to be out of illusion, experiences permanent bliss and none of these conflicting emotions.

When the great Master, Lord Krishna says in the timeless piece of philosophy and poetry, the *Bhagavad Gita*, 'The true *yogi* or spiritually evolved person is wide awake when the world sleeps', he does not mean in the literal sense that the enlightened person is awake when the world is sleeping at night. What He means is that the enlightened person has broken the veil of illusion and he realizes that the perceptions

of the opposites are only transient and not the Truth. So, he is not swayed by the opposites. He is no longer in the dream world that most of us are living in.

Legend has it that Janaka, a ruler in ancient India, who was a highly learned sage as well, had a person going around his capital, Mithila, shouting: *Jagrat! Jagrat!* many times a day. This means: Wake up! Wake up! Not only did his subjects need to be woken up from physical sleep, but also prodded into wakefulness and awareness from their unconscious and subconscious.

Do not think that you dream only when you are sleeping. Even in the waking state, you are weaving your dreams of the future and are not aware or conscious of the present. Everyone is in his own dream world, his own version of reality, which is nowhere close to the actual reality. When you realize this consciously and break out of it, you will find that the entire Existence is so beautiful; it is God and you are God because the entire Existence is one.

During nighttime, we are aware that we are dreaming, during daytime we are not aware that we are dreaming, that is the only difference. With fantasy, we are not just limiting ourselves, but are actually disrespecting ourselves. When you feel someone is more handsome than you are, you create a space, a gap between you and your body. You lose your uniqueness. You create



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dis-ease within yourself. God is not an engineer; he is an artist; he is a painter, a sculptor; no one being is like another because God has created each of us in a unique way.

When you see some hero on the television flexing his muscles, you yearn to be just like him. I am not saying that the desire to be physically fit is bad in itself. But, when you start being driven by the desire to look like someone else, you create a rift in your being, a wound in your being. Do not impose limits and thresholds and standards on yourself based on others. Compare yourself with your own self and see how you can better your standards and raise the bar. When you are thinking about others all the time, you are in the past or in the future, with your fantasy. When you are in your own boundary, you are in the present.

Quantum Spirituality

Living in the present moment is the missing link that helps you to traverse the horizontal and vertical lines at the same time and space. Every moment is a possibility that you can explode in all directions. In quantum spirituality, there is no attachment or detachment. If you are not in awareness, you detach and attach. When you are in awareness, there is no attachment or detachment. You simply are, that's all. You will not even be able to associate yourself with these opposites.

What do we mean by attachment and detachment?

Attachment is out of a deep ignorance of the fact that everything around us is part of a larger game, of which we are also a part. The truth is, all people, all animals, all things are all part of this grand universe. As long as we enjoy each person, each creature, each thing as a part of Existence, it is alright. But attachment makes us do otherwise. We catch hold of certain people, certain things, in the name of family, friends, pets and what not, and suffer because of that.

We feel love is not possible if we don't feel attached. No! Remember, an enlightened Master feels love for the whole universe and yet he is not attached to anything. This is supreme love. This is real love. Love is nothing but an overflowing energy in you that flows naturally because it is overflowing. Love is pure energy. And attachment is something made up by the mind based on some conclusions, from what you have been taught, from what you have read, from what has been drilled into you from a young age by society. So don't confuse love with attachment.

What is detachment? Detachment is being able to see that we are not attached in any way except that we are all an integral part of the Cosmos! When this happens, all greed, fear, attention-need etc. simply disappear and when all these disappear, we become a loving energy.

Attachment arises out of these emotions. When you are possessed by greed for wealth, you



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become attached to wealth. When you feel insecurity or fear, you become attached to your property and relationships. This same fear applies to your relationship with me as well. You are in deep fear of attachment to me. If you can love me as pure Existence, you will never feel threatened by any sort of attachment to me. It is only when you are superficially in it, when you feel attached to my form, to my physical presence, to the gains you get through me, to the temporary happiness that you get through me, you will feel threatened due to attachment to me.

If you can move beyond all these and love me as pure Energy, as the all-pervading Existence, as pure loving energy, then there will be no room for attachment, detachment or any other emotion except a pure and permanent joy at the being level; your body language will then simply radiate the peace and the joy that you experience. When the joy you experience is peaceful and not under the sway of attachment and other mind games, you will radiate an infectious fragrance; people will find it inspiring to just be around you.

How do all these emotions enter into us? Because we don't see ourselves and others as one. We are not taught to live as a universal family. We are not taught that each of us is like a bubble, independent and rising. We are always taught to catch and clutch with other bubbles. We call one bubble as mother, one

bubble as father, one bubble as sister, one bubble we call money and what not. And based on these relationships, we nurture fear, greed and desires.

A small story:

A man met his friend and his wife.

His friend seemed unusually depressed and his wife was in a merry mood.

He asked them what the matter was.

The friend said, 'I lost a thousand dollars in one consignment.'

The friend sympathized with him and asked why the wife seemed happy despite the loss.

She replied, 'I'm happy he gained thousand dollars. We lost only 50% of our profit margin.'

Attachment always makes us see things with a pessimistic attitude, with a fear of failure. But when you are detached, when you can see it as a whole and not through your attachment, you will feel liberated even as you are living.

Detachment is liberating. It is often mistaken to being cold. No! When it happens out of a lack of understanding, it becomes coldness. Detachment is also mistaken to be insensitivity. When you are intensely aware of all that is happening around you, you are actually intensely sensitive also. Only with this awareness and sensitivity,



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detachment can happen. When you are not aware, when you are not sensitive, you will be caught in a layer called attachment that actually bogs you down.

But people think you love only if you demonstrate some sort of an attachment to them. They expect us to show signs of attachment to them; they expect us to feel bad while departing from them, they expect us to be present during certain times to show our attachment to them.

A husband and wife moved into a new neighborhood because of a new job that the husband had been offered.

While the husband carried on with his new job, the wife arranged her new home in her own tasteful way and got talking to the new neighbors and getting familiar with the whole neighborhood.

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One day, the husband came home from work and they sat down for tea.

After a long silence, the wife said, 'Our neighbors are such a loving couple. The man comes home after work everyday and gives his wife a kiss right at the doorstep before entering the house. Why don't you ever do that?'

The husband looked bewildered. He looked up and said, 'But how can I? I don't even know her!'

You see, people are always looking for reassurance, for signs of attachment from each other. Be very clear: Attachment is purely a lack of intelligence. When there is real intelligence in you and you are aware and sensitive and are able to see things objectively, attachment will automatically drop. You will, in fact, become compassionate towards everyone without feeling attachment! That is the real growth! That is the liberation you need to work towards.

Detachment is not feeling the illusion of attachment; it is feeling love towards everything without feelings of pain or pleasure as a result of this love. When you feel this way, you stop expecting things for yourself also. And when you stop expecting things, it becomes liberating for you. You feel light and energetic.

Attachment causes heaviness; detachment causes lightness. Attachment is a result of imbalanced emotion; detachment is a result of pure love. Attachment causes anxiety; detachment causes bliss.

A small story:

There was a very respectable man in a certain town.

He was respected by all in the town as a learned man and was a guide to all.

One day, a young girl in that town announced that she was pregnant and that the man was responsible for it.



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The entire town was shocked and the chief of the town asked him about it.

He listened and simply asked, 'Really?'

The people in the town stopped respecting the man after this. The news spread around the whole town and people would spite him every time they saw him.

A few days later, the girl confessed that she had told a lie and that the man was not responsible for her baby.

The people of the town scolded her for it and approached the man and apologized for what had happened.

The man looked at them and asked, 'Really?'

The people once again started respecting him and talking to him like before.

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The man was supremely unperturbed by the sequence of events. Neither was he perturbed when he was accused of something he had not done and was disrespected by all the people, nor was he pleased when they started respecting him when the truth came out.

When you are centered on your core, you can be this way. When you are like this, you will also not be attached to the results of your actions.

Lord Krishna says in the *Bhagavad Gita*, '*Karmanyे vaadhikaraste maa phaleshu*

kadachanah'. It means: Do your duty but do not expect the results. He does not mean that you should work without expecting your salary. What He means is that you let the job itself become the enjoyment. Do the job with a totality and enjoy while you are doing it. Let the act of doing itself give you bliss. When you enjoy the path, even if you fail to get the desired result, you will feel deeply satisfied. However, if you do not enjoy the path, even if you succeed, you will still feel dissatisfied. This is what I mean when I say 'Bliss is the path and the goal'.

Let me tell you a real incident that happened some time back:



Once, one of my devotees handling the collection of money from my meditation classes in the USA lost the money before transferring it to the bank.

Some of my very close devotees were very upset when they heard about it.

I told them, 'Relax. When you are handling such big amounts of money, this is bound to happen at some point in time. Don't worry.'

But, they felt terribly sad because according to them, it was hard-earned money and I had worked very hard for it.

I told them, 'When you work intensely, the work itself is the reward, not the results of it. As long as you work on the basis of greed, there will be no joy.'

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When you work out of greed or desire for the result, you will find yourself working without enjoying the whole thing and also worrying about the results. When you work for the sake of enjoying the work and not for some intended end result, the work itself will bring you joy. You will not be attached to the results of it; if the results happen, they will be something incidental. Also, this way, you will work more intensely because of the joy you find in doing it. And automatically your results will be more beautiful. These are secrets that people do not know.

Some of my disciples tell me, 'Master, when we do your work, we experience such joy in doing it that once its done, firstly, we wonder if we really did it, and secondly, when people come and tell us that it is beautiful, strangely we feel no attachment to the job nor to their compliments. We feel strange when they refer to the done job in a very appreciative way. We feel no connection with it. We are only able to recall the experience we went through while doing it. We remember only the process. And above all, we feel we have grown so much in the process of doing it'

I tell you, it is so beautiful to do something as a meditation, totally doing it and not thinking of the result at all.

When people hear the essence of the *Bhagavad Gita*, they think that they should not think about the result, and trying not to think of the

result becomes another burden on their being! They find it hard to avoid thinking about the results. This is not the way. When you do this, you start with the result in your mind and try to push it out. This can never happen! Simply immerse your being in the joy of doing the work and then there will be no space for the results to enter. At the end of it, you will see that you have created results far beyond your comprehension.

The trick is that we should live within our boundaries; focus on what we are doing and where we are. Usually, when we are in one place at one time, we always think about another time and another place. Our body is never where our mind is. When we are in the office physically, our mind is having a vacation; when we are at home physically, our mind worries about work in the office. We invite illusion into our lives and suffer because of this. When we learn to live within our boundaries, in the present, we will find that there are no boundaries; time and space are no longer constraints.

Accept what there is. The *Isopanishad*, one of the major Hindu scriptures, declares in its opening lines: *Isa vasyam idam sarvam*: From the Cosmic Energy came all matter.

Everything is divine; nothing is excluded. If you wish to be enlightened, drop the idea of enlightenment. The idea of spirituality is like the



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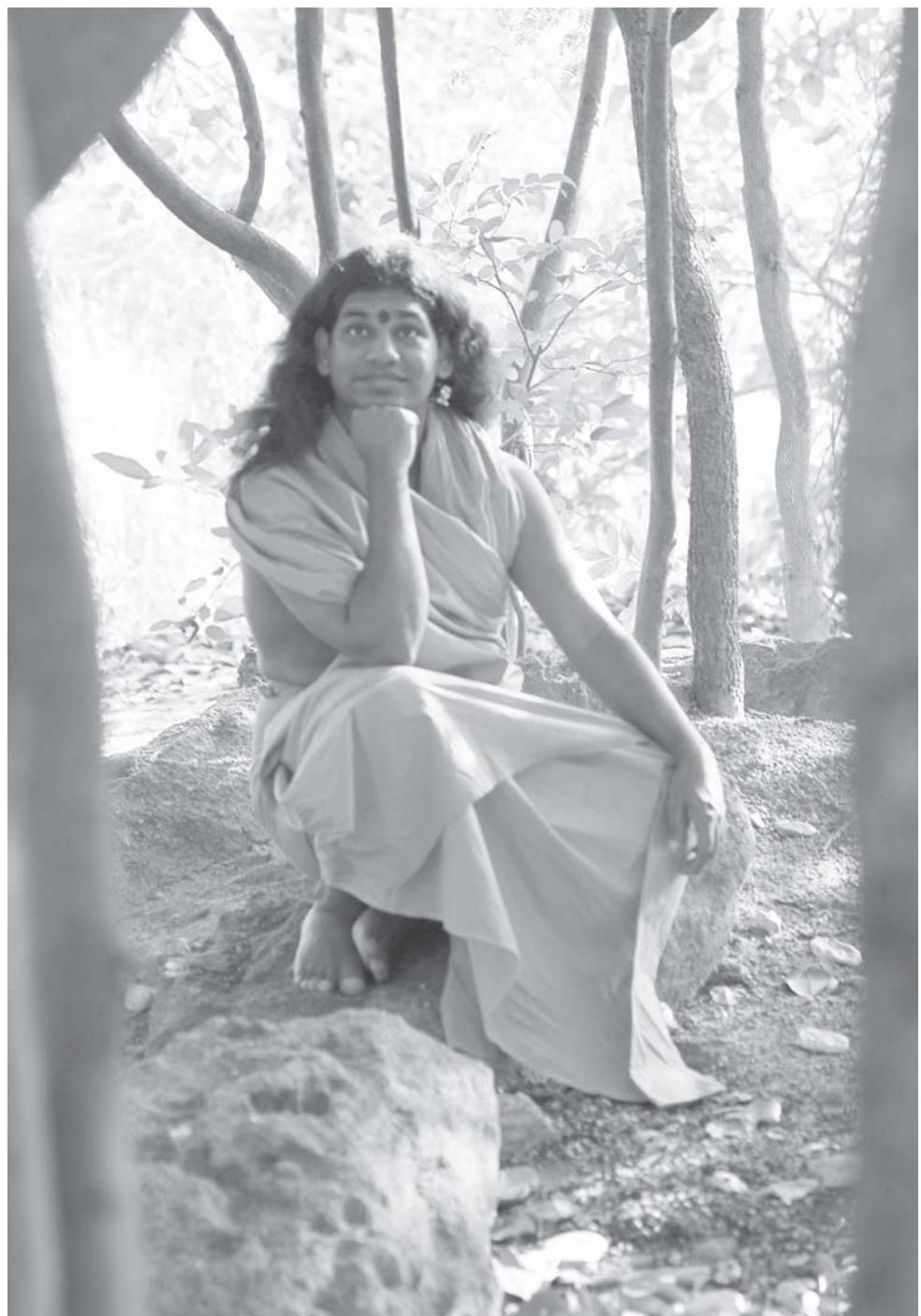
BLISS IS THE GOAL AND THE PATH



stick that lights the funeral pyre on which the dead are cremated. It is brought in to burn the material life; once that is accomplished, you need to burn that stick as well and move beyond it - into Quantum Spirituality.

Quantum Spirituality is not a holiday religion; it is where spirituality and day-to-day living merge and bliss becomes the path and the goal!

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Chapter 4



*The Mind works
in
Myriad ways*

Decisions, Decisions, Decisions...

People ask me so many times,

I am so tired having to make decisions all the time. Why can't others make these decisions and relieve me?

How can I make more decisions, more correct, most of the time?

How can I make people around me, people who work with me, agree with my decisions and be happy?

How can I stay happy with my own decisions?

A lot of us have faced similar questions at some point in time in our lives. There are times when you just don't want to take up the responsibility of the decision and see the effects of it. A CEO will tell you how tough it is to make the decision of laying off people who have worked hard for decades for the company; but he has to make them leave because of the tough economic conditions.

Or there are times when you feel passionately about some cause and put in all your effort to make it happen but others don't seem to feel it is as important as you do and you struggle to



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make them look at it your way. Decisions evoke different reactions and mixed feelings in all of us in various situations.

A small story:

A young girl was shopping for dresses.

She carried a pile of dresses and walked to the trial room and found that it was locked.

The salesgirl at the shop told her that they close the trial rooms 15 minutes before closing the shop.

To the salesgirl's surprise, the young girl heaved a sigh of relief and said, 'Thank you so much! You have just saved me from spending 500 dollars and the headache of having to make tough decisions!'

We are all like the lady with the pile of clothes, ready to heave a sigh of relief to know that the trial rooms are closed for the day. Most of us are so happy not to have to decide. Some experts even go to the extent of advising that not taking decisions is quite ok, since not taking a decision is also a decision!

But, life is all about taking decisions. At every point in our lives, we are faced with situations that loudly call out to us to decide, even if that decision means that we flow with what ever happens.

We make our decisions at three levels within our mind-body system. At the very basic level, we

react instinctively, without awareness, just like animals. We act before we think. We react viscerally. We take our decision out of our unconscious instincts. If we are not aware of what we are doing and why we are doing it and afterwards feel guilty about it, we are at the instinct level. This is the animal level.

Animals do not feel guilty when they react instinctively since that is their nature. As human beings, we feel guilty after we act instinctively. This is a common cycle we all go through in our day to day life. We act before thinking, and then go on a guilt trip. Try to understand, except when our lives are in danger, instinct is not our nature.

By the word instinct, I do not mean the natural instinct that is there in us. I mean the unconscious superficial level decisions that we make, without allowing our inner instinct to guide us. Our natural instinct is to flow with Existence. This is the way we ought to be. It comes from a deep connection that we are capable of with Existence. When we act from this, we will never get into wrong decisions or guilt. But this deep level instinct has been marred by our conditioning and life style. We therefore operate not from our basic instinct but from instinct at the superficial level, devoid of the touch of the Existential energy.

Psychologists have studied and found that children under the age of 7, function with their



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basic instinct and therefore live life spontaneously and in tune with Existence. If we just nurture their natural instinct and allow them to evolve, we will make them beautiful beings. But we keep telling them what to eat and what not to eat, what to do and what not to do. By and by, they lose touch with their natural instinct and slip into unconscious and confused instinct based actions; actions that stem out of a confused and heavy data bank of information. This is instinct based decision making.

Take the example of animals. They operate purely out of their basic and natural instinct, their connection with Existence. Have you seen a cow consulting a doctor or psychologist for clarity on matters regarding decisions on diet, habitat etc.? No! They simply flow in the right way, that's all. This way of functioning will never get you caught in the turmoil of decision making because you will not treat decision making as a separate task! The problem comes because you are treating it as a separate task, as an arduous task that calls for your energy and time. No! It is actually simply the way the river flows, that's all.

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So try to understand the difference between desperate instinct and basic instinct. Desperate instinct is almost suicidal; you simply plunge headlong into decisions and suffer because of that. Basic instinct is liberation! It liberates you from the clutches of the so-called decision-

making. It elevates you and shows you that you are a spiritual being in tune with the Cosmos. The more you dissolve into the feeling that you are the Cosmos and not any separate entity, the more relaxed you become, the more decisions simply happen!

At another level, the second level, we analyze things with our intellect till we are totally exhausted, before taking any decision. We go through various plans, reject one after another and decide to go with some plan of operation. This process of decision-making makes us feel tired and almost paralyzed.

And the pain is not over with the decision. We constantly make multiple guesses, revisit the situation and start all over again thinking about what else can go wrong with all those decisions that we have already made. As long as all our decisions are conscious and we are aware of why and how we are doing something, why we are thinking this way, we are in the intellect level, which is the human level. As humans, we worry.

Intellect can never give rise to whole and intelligent decisions. Intellect itself means fighting between the various fragments within ourselves in trying to reach a decision. Just imagine: if we tied four people together with a rope giving a little leeway, at the end of the day, would any of them have achieved any fulfillment? If one tried to scratch his head, the



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rope will cause the other to stop what he was trying to do! If the other decided to take a few steps forward, another one will be stopped abruptly in what he was trying to do! It will be just a push and pull of things and finally, nothing concrete will get accomplished! But all four of them will be exhausted, is it not?! They are exhausted without achieving anything!

This is exactly how the intellect functions. All possibilities, all dilemmas, all so-called choices in decision-making stall the progress, and the decision that emerges may appear to be correct for that moment, but at the expense of much repentance with time.

When you are in the level of intellect, under the push and pull of emotions and thoughts while taking decisions, any decision that you take causes repentance in some form. For example, if after considerable contemplation, you take a decision to stop your education for a year and take up a job, you might excel in your job, but there will be a lingering regret that you stopped your education.

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Your friends who are continuing to study will tell you what all you are missing because you discontinued studies.

Your relatives will tell you that you are doing something totally wrong in not following the conventional routine of studies that has been laid out after deep study in earlier days.

When you listen to all this, your mind will start to waver. You will feel that you took a wrong decision. You will start shaking in fear that you have done something drastically wrong in your life.

But supposing, you had taken the decision to continue with your studies and not work, if someone came and told you how much work experience you would have had if you had worked, you will repent then also!

You will feel, 'Oh God! What a golden opportunity I have missed. I could have learnt the nuances of work and then continued to study; then I would have been able to absorb education better' and what not.

Both ways, you will repent! Both ways, there is a push and pull. If you did one thing, the other thing will haunt you and if you did the other thing, the first thing will haunt you.

You will stop repenting only when you take a *total* decision, a *whole* decision. And when does this whole decision happen to you?

When you drop the divisions, when the four people become one and the rope vanishes, when you become integrated and get a clear vision from within, guided almost by an invisible but strong space within, whole decisions will start to happen in you.

When you decide through your intellect, you are deciding from the mind, superficially; when you



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decide from within, you are deciding through an expanse of space that does not hold any opinion, which does not know any binding words, which is not fragmented, which is not limited by any preconceived notions as to which is better or which is worse. It is pure love, pure innocence, which guides through a deep connection with the ocean of Existence of which you are a part.

This leads us to the third level of decision-making, what we call intuition! We go past the intellect, go past memory banks and delve into our innermost being in order to decide. Such decisions are of the highest quality. When we are in this mode of decision-making, we don't feel tired or exhausted; we feel happy. We feel energized with such decisions. Whether we are doing anything or not, if we are continuously aware of where we are and what we are doing, and if we are continuously in a blissful state, we are in the intuition level. This is the super conscious or divine level. This intuitive state is our true nature, which is why it makes us blissful.

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With intuitive decision-making, it not only makes the right decisions for us, it also gives us the energy to take it through.

People ask me, 'It is so important in corporate life to decide correctly. Otherwise we cannot succeed. How can we be perfect in our decision making?'

It is said that to be successful, all you have to do is to be correct more number of times than your opponent, that's all! So it is not such a serious and perfect thing that is impossible to achieve. It is perfectly possible to make the right decisions with your pure inner intelligence.

A small story:

Three nuns were walking in a forest.

They were returning to their monastery in the evening.

It was getting dark.

They heard running steps behind them and a man's voice shouted at them to stop.

The nuns were sure that the person following them had bad intentions.

They whispered to each other and one nun ran away to the left leaving the other two on the path.

The footsteps behind them continued to follow, but were now a lot closer than before.

Now, one of the two nuns ran away to the right through another path and the third one continued running straight.

After an hour, the three met up at the monastery gate.

The third nun had just reached there panting furiously and the other two asked anxiously,



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'What happened, are you alright?'

She said, 'Yes, I am ok.'

They asked her fearing the worst, 'What did you do, what did the man do to you?'

She replied, 'Oh, nothing. He caught up with me all right and told me to take off my clothes. So I told him to put his pants down, while I lifted my skirt.'

'Then what happened?' the other two nuns screamed in unison.

The third nun continued, 'It is simple. A woman can run a lot faster with her skirt up than a man can with his pants down, so I escaped!'

So all you have to do is to out think your opponent. Your decision needs to be better than his, that's all. It does not have to be perfect! Just try to understand this logic. Then half the pressure of having to make perfect decisions will leave you. When we start aiming at perfection in our decisions, we expend our energy in it and don't achieve what we are aiming to achieve. Instead, if we allow a playfulness, an intelligence, a totality to prevail, the decisions will emerge effortlessly and they will also be the proper ones.

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The mistake managers make is to think through their intellect. They exhaust their energy in thinking through their intellect. If you ask any of

the great scientists and researchers who have invented and discovered great theories, again and again, they say that their success came from something beyond their intellect, something beyond logic and facts, something they are not able to place their fingers on, something that gave them the intelligence and guts to take effective decisions.

Descartes proudly declared, 'I think, therefore I am', and millions have echoed him over the centuries, equally proudly and equally blindly. We fail to realize as Descartes did, that the gift of intuition that transcends the intellect is what links us to the Cosmic Consciousness and therefore, makes us truly what we are.

What we need to imbibe is the truth of *Vedanta* - Hindu philosophy, that states: I am divine when I have no mind. When you transcend the mind, transcend thoughts, and connect with the inner Self and are truly aware at all times, you are automatically in the state of intuition.

What scientists call serendipity, which is a natural happening without verifiable cause, is in fact, intuition. Almost all inventions and major discoveries are serendipitous. The scientist may have embarked upon a path that is logical and rational, but somewhere along the path there are revelations that are not part of the original script. We can make an endless list of them: The laws of gravity discovered by Newton when an apple fell on his head, the discovery of



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penicillin, the invention of the telephone and many other such discoveries and inventions without which our lives would not be complete today. They were all based on serendipitous accidents that were not part of the scientists' game plan.

One of the famous examples is that of Kekule, one of the scientists who was working on trying to explain the properties of a certain class of carbon compounds.

He was trying to make out the molecular structure of the chemical benzene, which had properties that could not be explained by the traditional molecular structure models that were available then.

One night, he had a dream of a snake putting its tail in its mouth.

When he got up in the morning, he had deduced the molecular structure of benzene as a ring-shaped structure!

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This opened the doors for organic chemistry, which deals with a whole class of this type of compounds that have a ring structure, a molecular structure that had been unheard of till then.

Only intuition can enable this quantum leap in any field. With the rational, logical mind, you can only extrapolate from your past experiences because it cannot comprehend anything that is

not already present in its database of experiences, in its familiar pattern of things.

How many times have we ourselves not experienced a strong gut feeling towards a decision but at that point find there is no logical explanation for it? You follow the decision and it takes you to the solution of the problem but the start of the path was not in rational and logical thinking.

It is not only the scientists; whether we believe it or not, whether we accept it or not, whether we understand it or not, we all have the gift of intuition. Ancient sages of India, the great *yogis* say that we can all have intuition if we work for it. They have demonstrated that intuition happens beyond intellect. They are all living examples to prove the statement also.

These *yogis* say that intuition is beyond science, beyond rational thinking, beyond traditional logic. They insist that we can tune into intuition as a part of our regular lives; that it is not a gift for a chosen few. In the modern society, intuition is an accident. By accident we stumble upon it. With the *yogis*, it was a natural happening. The question, therefore, is not if we can all be intuitive, but merely how we can exercise our intuitive nature.

Many of the postulates and results in Vedic mathematics also fall into this category. Since they came out of tapping intuition that enables



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a direct quantum leap into the results, many of the results seem to be virtually impossible to be derived by rational thinking. Intuition is always a quantum leap, never a sequence of logical steps or any process.

If you look around, there is continuous intelligence and energy that is there to solve your problems. If you have lived for 50 years and still have problems, in spite of the experience you have, you are just disturbing yourself. You can live another 50 years based on your experience without worrying. This is the truth.

A small story:

A boss holds a meeting to organize for a farewell for one of his retiring staff members.

He says, 'Here we have an employee who does not know the meaning of disloyalty and tiredness. What should we give him?'

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A voice from the back resounded, 'A dictionary.'

If you want to solve problems you can try with logic, with your intellect. If you wish to dissolve problems for all times you need intuition.

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Someone asked me, 'Is intuition an evolution of instinct?' I say: No.

Darwin's evolutionary theory breaks down at the human level. If Darwin's theory of evolution were to be true, all monkeys would be humans by now and humans would have evolved into

something better like superhumans, is it not? But there are so many monkeys still remaining and man has been in this latest state of evolution for such a long time! He has not become a superhuman!

The underlying truth is that humans are the only species with consciousness. Buffaloes cannot become Buddhas or enlightened beings, however long and however much they try! Only human beings can become Buddhas and this is because they are pure consciousness. This has to be understood. It is because of our clear consciousness that intuition is possible.



The human brain stores memories and skills of our entire past; therefore, we actually know how to fly and to swim. Even if we do not know how to fly and swim in this birth, just by virtue of these stored memories and skills in our depths, we actually know these skills. It is just that we are conditioned to limit ourselves and have therefore forgotten our potential to fly and be free. We have lost both the instinct and the skill.

We have become thinkers. We know to execute any action of ours only by thinking first. The moment you think, you limit yourself. Thoughts connect the past and future. Thoughts are a sump between the past and future. If one of these, either the past or future is removed, all thinking stops.

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The future is just a collection of our past. That is why, we do not have the intelligence to even make new mistakes; we just repeat our past mistakes! When we are in the present, the here and now zone, all that we are aware of is the present. Our mind stops when we are in the present. But it is not happy. The mind, just like any other being, has an instinct to survive. So, it comes up with all kinds of reasons why we should jump to the past or the future because only then can it exist.

When we step into the present, we step out of time bound awareness. We step beyond tension. Our body stops producing adrenalin. Time bound awareness is mass, which is solid. Non-time-bound awareness is pure energy, liquid, dynamic, bubbling and creative. We step out of our boundaries. We become free. We become intuitive.

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When our thoughts reduce to zero, when they stop, our present vision extends into the past and future. We become free of time and space constraints.

The great sages of ancient India measured time through the concept called *kshana*. *Kshana* is not chronological time. It was not measured as the amplitude of a pendulum or the frequency of an electronic chip. *Kshana* was not generic time, but individual time. *Kshana* is the time between any two thoughts in an individual. When I use the word individual, I mean that *kshana* varies

from person to person; my *kshana* and your *kshana* are different.

In the case of the average person, in whom the mind is constantly active, desires and thoughts pour out without a stop; the time between two thoughts is very, very small, so small that you can't even make it out! In the case of an enlightened being, who is in a no-mind state, in whom there are no thoughts, *kshana* is infinite.

Kshana is the time between two thoughts. It is the space between two thoughts. This is the time and space that Buddha referred to as *shoonya*, and what Sankara referred to as *poorna*. It is the no-mind zone, the mindful zone, in which you touch base with yourself. It is that present moment in which you come face to face with the divinity in you, when you recognize the cosmic energy that you are a part of.

When you are in that *kshana*, you are truly aware; you are energized and refreshed. The more you fall into that *kshana*, the more intuitive you become. Most often, we only accidentally fall into the *kshana*, and when this happens, we find miraculous revelations to us like what we discussed earlier. Meditation takes you into the awareness of this *kshana*.

When you are in front of an enlightened Master who is in a no-mind state, without thoughts, your own thought level comes down, and your *kshana* becomes longer. Without even trying, you become calmer, more peaceful, and more aware.



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The same experience occurs when you are in the energy field of an enlightened Master who is no longer in his body, but is in a *Jiva Samadhi* - where he entered into final resting and where his body has been placed and covered. Many of the great temples in India such as Tirupati, Tiruvannamalai, Mantralaya and Palani are built around the burial spots of enlightened Masters and that is the reason why we feel such sanctity and peace in these locations.

They say that an idle mind is the devil's workshop. The idle mind meant here is very different from the idle mind we have been discussing. The idle mind that they talk about is a mind that is listlessly engaged. The idle mind that we are talking about is the mind that is empty of all thoughts, that has transcended thoughts, that has seen the Ultimate Truth and has died in its efforts. It is God's own workshop! They are two ends of the same spectrum. Of course, extremes always look alike!

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Scriptures state that spending 11 *kshanas* in this zone of no-mind, without thoughts, enables one to alter the future and 22 *kshanas* in the time shaft zone leads to enlightenment. When we relax into our *Ajna chakra*, our third eye energy center that is present between the brows, at zero thoughts per second, we become intuitive, and can harness the Cosmic Intelligence or attain to enlightenment. We can then write our own destiny and become masters of our lives.

B L I S S I S T H E G O A L A N D T H E P A T H

When we move into the present, into this intuitive state of no mind and no thoughts, and allow decisions to happen by themselves, choicelessly, without forcing them through logic and rationale, decisions will always be correct; because these decisions are driven by the cosmic energy.



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How does the mind work?

A small story:

A lady visited the doctor, a general physician and complained of a lot of pain.

The doctor asked her where she experienced pain.

The lady touched her right knee and said, 'It is paining here doctor.'

Then she touched her stomach and said, 'It is paining here too doctor.'

Then she touched her left ear and screamed, 'Here too it is paining doctor.'

The doctor was watching her all the while.

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He then told her, 'You've got a sprain in your right hand.'

Our mind tries its best to find something to magnify and chew on. If it doesn't find anything it tries to find something out of nothing!

Most of us think that our minds are very logical. We feel that our mind is our master because of which we are able to achieve so many things. Actually, the mind is the most illogical thing. Just try this experiment. Sit down for five minutes and write down all the thoughts that

come to your mind in these five minutes, honestly, without editing. Whatever thought comes, put it down. Then, read what you have written. You will realize how illogical the mind is!

We are running a mental asylum inside our heads. One moment, you would have been thinking about your workplace; then, for no reason, you will find yourself thinking about the house. The next moment, without realizing it, you will be thinking of someone in London. There is no connection, no rationale and no logic in the way our mind moves from one thought to another.

Vivekananda, an enlightened Master of modern day India says beautifully, 'The mind is like a drunken monkey that has been stung by a thousand scorpions.' Can you imagine the state of this monkey?

A monkey by itself jumps for no reason, and a sting of one scorpion is enough to make anyone jump leave alone a monkey. Imagine the state of a monkey stung by a thousand scorpions! Unimaginable is it not? While this is difficult to imagine and we feel that it is too much to comprehend, Vivekananda uses this to describe none other than our own mind within us. He is describing the mind within us with which we are trying to comprehend this very statement, the mind that we believe is our friend, philosopher and guide.



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If we look deeply into our minds, we will completely agree with Vivekananda. After all, Masters never make any statements that are lesser than the truth. Only we don't understand them and therefore exclude what they are saying or interpret their words with our own mind.

Our mind works in myriad ways, truly. It is just like a monkey that jumps from one thought to another with no logical connection, with no rule or regulation, where there is only chaos and no order. And we remain faithful servants to it. If you sit down and go through each and every thought in your mind, you will realize that actually, 99% of it is wasteful; 99% is not of any use, is of no productivity; does not relate to the present moment at all.

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If you look into the mind, there is only a current of thoughts, that's all. It is a mere association of thoughts, one to another to another. They are all parallel, unconnected thoughts, all about the past and the future. It is a general mess! Of what use is all this? The only thing it does is to damage the consciousness. The more thoughts, the more is the damage to the consciousness - be very clear. And the danger in this whole process is that it has become unconscious within us.

In the meditation programs, when I ask people to write down their thoughts without filtering, it is an amazing revelation to them! First, they are

unable to comprehend their own mind; second they are unable to keep pace with their mind when they attempt to write; third it scares them and finally, they find it totally new although they have been with that mind throughout their lives!

Almost all our thoughts are just a race towards nowhere. It continuously creates layers and more complex layers over our consciousness. That is why very often while our consciousness is compared to a crystal clear pond, our mind is the moss that covers it. While our consciousness is compared to a clear mirror, our mind is the dust that covers it.

Why do we say this? Just think, if you only focused on the present moment, you will not have to think at all. Your mind will not think at all. It will become only a tool to handle every passing moment. It will simply be a tool. It will be like a child's erasable magnetic board on which you can write a few sentences for that moment, erase them, re-write and again erase. Most of the time, the board will be empty is it not? But through that board, so much would have been transacted. And there will be no trace of any of those transactions.

While the board remains empty, so much will be happening through it. While the board remains white most of the time, just the essential lines will appear as we write on them and then erased through the slider eraser. It is a beautiful



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board actually. It shows how exactly one's mind should be used; how the mind should be handled, beautifully, productively, without any strain, without any stress, just like a child's magnetic board!

From the metaphor of the board we can learn that a very small space is enough to handle large volumes of information; that it is possible to keep that space clean and beautiful always and yet transact through it; that our mind is meant to be kept clean always; that it is a thing as miraculous as the magnetic board is for a child.

And what does that small space do? It is simply available to write small statements pertaining to that moment, to handle that moment, to flow with the moment and take decisions spontaneously, and then it becomes empty until the next moment calls for it. Each instance of writing is for that moment, precious words for just that moment and then the words go away!

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The next moment requires different words, powerful words but different words suited to that new moment. When the mind works in this fashion, the words that appear in the mind for every moment will not be dependent on the person at all! They will simply appear according to the situation, according to the requirement of that moment, driven by emptiness actually, driven by the all-pervading intelligence, and then go away.

This is how Masters operate. That is why you can never frame them. They don't have an inner

chatter at all! You act out of your inner chatter; your inner chatter decides who you are. That is why it is easy to frame you. But with a Master, there is no current of words in them that is there all the time in us. They are empty inside, blank and clean like the magnetic board. As and when things take shape, as and how things flow, some words appear on the magic board, handle the moment and disappear!

It is so beautiful, is it not? That is why, the *kshana* we were talking about earlier, the time gap between two thoughts is very large for them and it is infinitesimal for us. It is infinitesimal for us because there is a constant current of words in us. It is difficult to find any gap between one thought and another because they occur almost simultaneously, all inter connected even if there is no logical connection between them. The *kshana* is not perceivable.

There are meditation techniques that ask us to focus on the gap between one thought and another, which is based on this *kshana*. It is the most difficult meditation for us! We can do any other meditation but this! We will probably go insane if we try doing this. It is only then that we realize the sort of madhouse we are running in us. There is virtually no *kshana* in us! In trying to perceive the *kshana*, we will make it even smaller and non-perceivable!

By ourselves, we are a beautiful mechanism with an inbuilt intelligence. If we allow this



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intelligence to flower and express itself, we have fallen in tune with ourselves and with Existence, of which we are a part.

It has been researched that to emulate the parallel processing done by the human brain, to receive a piece of information, analyze, understand and respond, it would need a computer which is three floors in height and the sound which would be generated would be at least that of ten generators! We have such a powerful system within us.

So how does the mind normally work? How does this collective intelligence of the cellular system of our mind body entity function? How can we consciously optimize our mind body system?

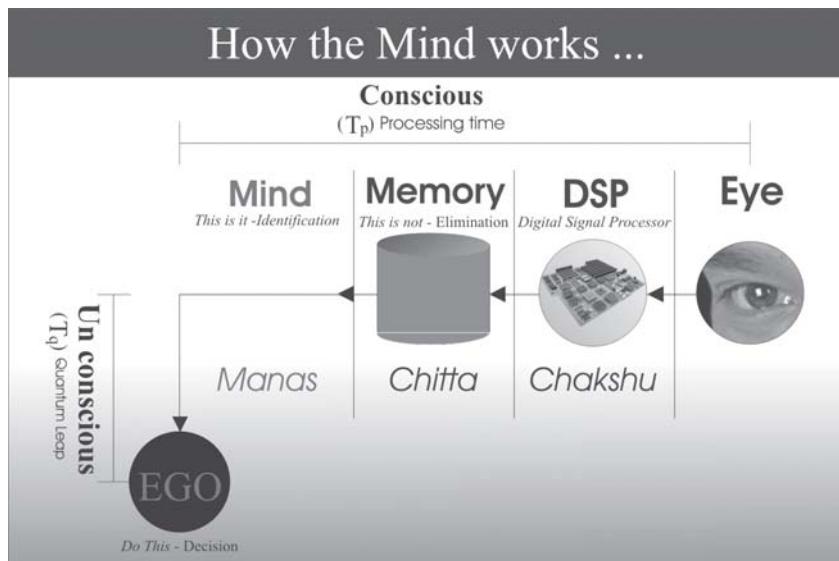
Sages of ancient India described the process. They described it not in physical terms but in conceptual terms. Their description enables us to understand how the mind functions. Let us now take the process of seeing, which is almost 80% of our total sensory perception.

The Mind works in Myriad ways

Take a look at this picture here. (*facing page*)

Your eyes see me now. In Sanskrit, we call this seeing power *chakshu*; it is the energy behind the physical eyes; it is not a physical organ. *Chakshu* is a virtual digital signal processor.

Its digital signal output goes into your memory, called *chitta* in Sanskrit, as a digital file.





The memory starts analyzing the facts of the case; it compares the input it has received against its database. *Chitta* acts as a filter; it excludes first. It responds based upon comparison and elimination.

For example when you are seeing me now, it says: What I see is not an animal, it is not a rock, it is not a plant and so on. It says, *na iti, na iti*: not this, not this.

The partly processed filtered file then goes to *manas*, your mind. The *manas* makes a positive identification of what is seen.

The mind concludes: What you see is a human being talking to you; he is a swami; he is taking a class on spirituality, and so on. The *manas* concludes 'This is it'.

The object identified by the mind, the *manas*, then takes a quantum leap to the ego as a file.

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This ego is the part similar to what has been described by Freud and others as the collective identity of the individual, where all experiential data is stored.

The ego associates the file with earlier similar memories and decides based on past experience what to do now.

For example, if you have had a good experience listening to some spiritual class earlier, if you have had some pleasant experiences with a

swami earlier, you will decide that you will stay here and listen. If however, the data shows that your experience with such a person or some similar class has been bad, you immediately decide that it is better to leave, and you move.

The ego decides for us. We express that decision and act upon that decision. This zone of ego is not under the control of our conscious, logical and rational mind. It simply overrides our logic. The ego stores impressions, past memories, unfulfilled desires and various emotive reactions continuously, whether we are conscious of these experiences or not. The ego never sleeps, not even for a moment. The data stored by the ego are called *samskara* in Sanskrit.

Samskara are nothing but the remains, the vestiges of unfulfilled desires. When your mind leaps between the past and the future, you miss the present and are not able to live it fully. You are not able to fulfill your desires completely. These unfulfilled desires remaining in us are the *samskara* that drive us. They are our deep, driving force.

When you make the final decision by looking up the huge database of the unconscious, be very clear that it is the *samskara* that are making the decision for you. Every *samskara* distorts the file before the decision is taken. Every *samskara* writes its signature on the file before the decision is taken. When there are too many *samskara*, the decision is taken impatiently and impulsively and the decision is out in no time.



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The *Brihadaranya* Upanishad says,

You are what your deep driving desire is,

As is your desire, so is your will,

As is your will, so is your act,

As is your act, so is your destiny.

Because of all your past decisions, the present is happening and because of all your present decisions, your future will happen.

The problem is, many of your decisions are made unconsciously. So, when the situation arises, you don't take responsibility for it. You have forgotten your past decisions. This is like going to a restaurant, eating whatever you want and then when you finally get the bill, you are shocked and refuse to pay the bill saying you have not ordered for such a big bill!

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Just try to understand: All your present is only the result of your past decisions and all your future is only the effect of your present decisions. Be aware of your present; that is enough. There is no need to worry about the past or the future. By doing this, you will be able to design your future, because when you do this, you are doing it consciously. There is no need to be concerned about destiny and free will.

People are always concerned about free will versus destiny. I tell you: Just be in the present

moment; the future will simply take shape in a beautiful way. When you are in the present totally, you will be so joyful and light; the future will not disturb or distract you at all. You will just live moment to moment without the need to worry about the future. That is the beauty of living in the present.

Buddha teaches, 'Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment.'

From birth we carry mental attitudes that are called *vasana*. *Vasana* are the seeds from which the desires, unfulfilled desires of *samskara* spring forth. Compared to *vasana* as seeds, *samskara* can be termed as plants. These *samskara* drive us into action, which is our *karma*. *Karma*, in comparison to *vasana* as seeds and *samskara* as plants, are full-fledged trees.

It is something like this:

Imagine a lady walking through a shopping mall.

She sees a pair of shoes through the window.

The first and second time, she just looks at them and passes by.

The desire to look at them comes from her mental make up, the *vasana*.



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The third time she stops and thinks how good these shoes will look on her, how she can wear them to parties and so on. The *vasana* has now taken root and becomes a *samskara*, which now adds a lot more substance to the fleeting look.

After a few such encounters with the shoe, the lady buys it, creating *karma*.

Of course, she may wear the shoe just for a week or two weeks and then discard it.

The cycle of *vasana*, *samskara* and *karma* start all over again when she looks at another pair of shoes.

As long as the desire is not fully satisfied with awareness, the cycle repeats. The key here is to complete it with *deep awareness*.

When we do anything with awareness, we will never create *karma* (unfulfilled actions) for ourselves. When we don't infuse awareness into all that we do, we will always have lingering desires that become our *karma*.

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Let me explain what exactly I mean by the interconnected usage of the words 'unfulfilled actions' and 'awareness':

Let us say your boss fired you in front of the whole office. There are two ways in which you can go through the scene.

The first way is to react immediately and talk back to him in anger; you simply let go and fire

and walk out. You become lop sided here; you are not balanced, you are not centered; you are swaying to one side and creating a new cycle with the boss, a new cycle of words and actions; you act out of unawareness here. When you act out of unawareness, you are simply reacting, you are not acting, be very clear. When you don't hold your awareness with you, you simply react, just 'out of the top of your head' and you create what is called a *karmic* cycle. This is how *karmic* cycles start and these *karmic* cycles that are initiated are what are referred to as unfulfilled actions.

A *karmic* cycle is created by you when you act not from your core, but from your periphery and create situations that need to be completed in some way or the other, at some time or the other, in this birth or another birth. When there is an imbalance in your words and actions due to lack of inner intelligence and awareness, you create a *karmic* cycle.

The second way, is to remain centered in your consciousness, hold on to your awareness, watch the whole thing taking shape, just quickly become the watcher when your boss fires you. When this happens in you, there will not be any need to fire back at all. There will be no reaction because awareness is reining the whole show. When awareness reins, you can never react. You can only act and that too in a very deeply intelligent way. Your act will simply



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dissolve all possibilities for a *karmic* cycle to take shape from that scene.

When awareness is continuously there, you will never create cycles that need to be completed. Mind you, by acting out of deep awareness, don't understand it as suppressing your emotions that drive you to let go. No! It is not suppression. Suppression itself is felt only when emotions are waiting to let go. With awareness, all these emotions of anger, fear, lust or greed will be reduced to a mere play of the mind and when this happens, they are no longer waiting to go and therefore there is no question of suppressing them.

So our *samskara*, our unfulfilled desires actually define us. They drive us. They lead our life. *Samskara* drive us to take illogical, unconscious and irrational decisions. For instance, a person decides to smoke knowing fully well logically that it is bad for health. He still goes ahead. He has no control over his actions; his action is driven by his *samskara*, his desire that is unfulfilled.

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How can any person consciously send smoke into his system? The person is not conscious of what he is doing and hence does something totally against his conscious decision. He knows that smoking is injurious to health and that a lot of people have died due to smoking. But he gets an inspiration to smoke, a decision that simply overrules his logic; and he smokes. After

smoking what happens? He feels guilty. That is a different matter.

These *samskara* come up and confuse us, they depress us, they disturb us, they stress us, they cause guilt in us and create scope for more guilt. *Samskara* can and will change the whole course of our life. They can create conflicts. When you live your desires fully, there are no remnants left and hence, no *samskara* will be there to pull you back into repeating the action so as to fulfill the desire.

The famous Indian philosopher J Krishnamurthy says, 'Even if once in your lifetime, you can witness your emotions without moving your body and without support or suppression, you will see very clearly that *samskaras* lose power over you. If you support the thoughts and emotions, *samskara* grow stronger. If you suppress them, they lead to perversions.'

Elimination of *samskara* is elimination of the negative energy from within our system. One who is without *samskara* is fully aware; he is enlightened. *Samskara* keep you in bondage. They are the root cause of all suffering. When Buddha said that desires are the root cause of suffering, he was referring to the effect of unfulfilled desires that drive us irrationally, blindly, without awareness.

When you remember something that disturbs you, you create an energy clot; and when an



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energy clot takes shape, the space in your being reduces. When you meditate on your inner space you expand. For proper expansion to happen and for you to experience joy, there should be no energy clots within you that disturb you; there should be no *samskara*.

From a young age you are taught your *samskara*. You accumulate them. When you are attracted to something intensely or hate something intensely you collect files on that. Understand: One kind of logic is this: All men have one head, Socrates is a man, and so you can conclude that Socrates has one head. There is another type: There are two doors; one door is open, what about the other? You cannot say anything about the other door. This second logic is the logic of intelligence. You need to be *deeply aware* to employ this logic successfully. If we are aware, we will never collect more and more *samskara*. We collect these only because we are not aware.

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People ask me why they should follow a Master. I tell them, 'either follow a Master or follow your *samskara*.' It is a very clear choice!

Anyhow, this process of perception and identification of what we perceive, the process that happens between our eyes and our mind happens with our awareness, consciously. However, the process the file takes between our mind and our ego happens without our awareness; it happens unconsciously.

Often we decide at the ego stage against our logic, against our best interests, irrationally, dangerously. You certainly know that smoking is injurious to health based on logic, but your mind takes a leap and decides without your control, unconsciously, dangerously, to smoke. The problem is, we don't even know that our unconscious mind is playing. We don't even know that our decisions are distorted by thousands of *samskara* in the decision making process.

When you are aware, conscious, you are in control of your actions and thoughts. Most of the time, however, it is the subconscious or unconscious mind taking decisions. This subconscious mind is like a huge database of our past experiences. Since it is just a database, it is really like a film projector. Whatever is stored in it gets projected on the screen. If you want to change the scene projected, it is of no use to try anything with the screen. All you need to do is to turn off the projector or change the reel being played. The subconscious mind is like an autopilot mechanism. When the autopilot mechanism is in charge, the vehicle moves without the awareness or observation of the pilot, which is the conscious mind. That is when the conscious mind is free to dream about the future or dig the past.

Most of the time, we are under the control of the unconscious mind. The perception of any incident or moment is usually intercepted at the level of the unconscious mind itself without



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allowing the decision to be reviewed by the conscious mind. We are not even aware that we are not in control! We hardly spend 5% of our activities using the conscious mind on a given day.

The way to get in control then is to be aware, fully conscious, so that your conscious mind is more engaged in taking decisions rather than the unconscious mind, which is not under your control. Then, you will no longer be in the grip of the past or be in the false limitations imposed by your unconscious mind taking decisions based on its programming by society and the environment.

Let us say that the process time taken for the information to travel from eye to mind is **T_p**. This is the time when the transfer process for the data is logical. It takes place consciously, with awareness. Now let us say that the time taken for the unconscious process, from mind to ego is **T_q**. Here, the data passes through *samskara*, which distorts the file, twists our decisions without our knowledge.

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When we are driven by the unconscious mind, by the power of the *samskara*, we become restless. We decide without knowing what we are doing. We act without awareness. When our *samskara* are more, there is no patience to go through all the *samskara* and take a decision, so the decision is taken impulsively out of deep confusion. As soon as the information goes to the ego, it comes back with a decision, just out of the top the head.

In this case, T_q is much lesser than T_p . The leap to the ego and back is very less when compared to the time taken for the data to reach the mind from the eye. What happens here is, when faced with a decision, we feel uneasy, we feel guilty, there are many mixed emotions and past *samskara* waiting to put their signature on the file containing the data and so T_q is done in no time and the decision is passed. Also, when we operate in this fashion, we will feel exhausted at the end of it because of the play of our *samskara* upon us.

It is when the time taken for the leap to the ego and back, that is T_q , is greater than the conscious process time T_p that we are really aware of what is going on. We are then able to act above the instinct and intellect levels with pure awareness. We are then in a super conscious level and our unconscious is infused and filled with a vibrant silence and intuition instead of clogged with *samskara*. We become aware of who we are, what we are and why we are doing things; what we are doing. The decisions taken at this level of intuition are total for us.

Infusing silence, bringing thoughtless awareness to your unconscious zone is your ultimate liberation. You become a *videhi* - one who is outside his body even when he is in his body.

At the very least, we should operate in such a way that we spend equal time in our conscious mind as we do in our unconscious, where $T_p = T_q$ so that we perform with the power of our



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intellect, instead of instinct. When we perform with our intellect, our decisions will be alright but we are still not using our full potential; we are still not operating in the zone of intuition that is meant for us. We will be in a break-even state as far as our energy is concerned; we will feel neither exhausted nor rejuvenated, we will just be, that's all. But when we work in the zone of intuition, we will be rejuvenated at the end of the day. That is the scale to see in which zone we are working.

How do we reach this zone of intuition? How do we move from instinct to intellect to intuition? How do we keep the area of ego empty, free from *samskara*?

Meditation is the only solution. It takes us from intellect to intelligence, to the state of intuitive thinking. It creates tremendous awareness in us that sheds light upon the unconscious and burns out our *samskara*. Meditation leads us into intuition, into a conscious awareness of the present, without influence of the past. It creates us anew; it gives a fresh lease of life free from the past and the future, just helping us be in the present.

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Meditation is the ultimate gamble that one can undertake to completely transform, to completely come out of illusions, to embark upon a journey where bliss is the path and the goal.

What is the Big Hurry?

These days, we can see big and beautiful billboards on the roads anywhere we go. We can see male and female models confidently smiling at us from the billboard. Although they appear to be relaxed and smiling, you can make out that they are following a very hectic daily routine that is causing them great stress. Every hour of their day will be filled from the time they wake up at six till they go to bed late in the night. Before they go to bed, they will take a pill to take care of their headache so that they can get up fresh the next morning. And the advertisement board that they posed for will be for a headache pill!

These days, whatever moves faster is better. Communication is at the speed of light. The world has become a global village. E-mails have to be responded to within an hour. We all are always in a great hurry. What are we doing? Where are we all running? Rather, what are we all running for in such a great hurry?

We are all driven by greed and fear. Greed tells us that there is no time to lose. Fear tells us that we are going to lose. So, we hurry not knowing what we are going to lose, not knowing what its value is.



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We cram more hours into a day, more years into a lifetime. We multitask and multi-live. We try to enjoy cerebrally without any joy.

And what is cerebral enjoyment? It is enjoying purely with the mind, either because we don't have the time to do things and enjoy, or because it has become a habit to enjoy with the mind.

A young man came to see me. He said, 'Master, I have everything sorted out. I am building a house with a 25-year loan. By that time my daughter will be ready for marriage. My son will be in a good job. The house would be very valuable and we can get a lot of money by selling it. We will invest most of it and settle down with you in the ashram.' His daughter was a two-year old and his son was still a baby his wife was holding!

He had finished off twenty-five years of his life in just ten minutes. He feels that his calling is spiritual. Mortgaging the present for the future is not spirituality.

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This constant running is nothing but a reflection of our inner restlessness. At the end of it, we feel we have missed out on *something* in life. We ask ourselves if the running has been worth it.

The Greek emperor, Alexander, after he had conquered most of the world, felt very depressed. He was depressed, as he had nothing more left to conquer. His desire was to conquer the whole world. That is what prompted him to run

without stopping and he achieved it also. But at the end of it, he felt only depressed! This is what happens when we are constantly in pursuit of material things. Your being will never be satisfied with these things; the vacuum or void or depression that you feel is the depression of your being which can never be filled by external pleasures and accomplishments.

A small story:

There was a king who lived in great comfort and luxury.

After many years, he became very bored and depressed.

He had all the comforts and wealth that life could offer him. But all the excitement had gone out of his life.

If you don't have something, at least you have the excitement and hope of attaining it. He had everything he could want. But he was so depressed that he would not even come out of his room.

All his ministers tried everything; they brought him all the best things from all over the country to get him back to his original self.

Finally, they told him about an enlightened Master who lived in the forest.

They begged him, 'He has helped all kinds of people to come out of depression; please meet with him.'



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The king agreed and he went to the Master with all his doubts and questions.

He asked, 'Can you give me something to get me out of depression?'

The Master said, 'If you can give me all your wealth in a gunny bag, I will tell you.'

The king got suspicious and thought to himself, 'Why should he ask for all my wealth?' But the grace of the Master pulled him beyond his doubt.'

If a person is enlightened, he penetrates your being. He gets past your intellect and doubt.

He reasoned with himself, 'Anyhow, I am not happy with all this wealth. Maybe the Master can at least give me back my peace of mind even if he takes all my money.' So, he converted all his wealth to diamonds and took them to the Master.

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Without saying a word, the Master grabbed the gunny bag and ran.

The king couldn't catch him because the Master knew the forest well.

The king blamed himself for being such a fool to believe an unknown person and visualized himself being a beggar.

He shuddered at the utter poverty that lay in front of him.

When he was rich, he suffered. Now, he was poor and even now he suffered.

After a while the king stopped running. When the king stopped, the Master stopped. The king jumped on the Master and grabbed the bag back. The Master said, 'Fool! Now, take this and enjoy.'

Suddenly, the king felt like a rich guy and was very happy!

You see: It is the mind that plays these tricks on us. Just with the mind, the king felt unhappy first with all the wealth, he felt miserable when the wealth was taken away and felt joyful when the wealth was restored. Between his first unhappy state and his final joyful state, there was no difference. The wealth that he had with him was the same. But the same wealth did not give him happiness first, but when it was taken away from him and restored, it gave him happiness! Nothing had changed except his mind! Not even a penny was removed or added to his wealth!

Our mind keeps us unhappy by playing these games on us and making us run. However much we achieve, it keeps driving us to newer horizons but the horizon recedes as fast as you try to reach it because it has no real existence. The horizon is only an illusion.

All our hopes of satisfying our desires are just like a mirage in a desert.



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There is good reason to plan for tomorrow; it is important. However, we should not forget to live today. We need to learn to do whatever we do with total focus, with enjoyment and to live that moment fully.

Lao Tzu calls this 'mindfulness' *Wei-wu-Wei*, action with no action. It is to enter into each activity totally, playfully, spontaneously, in such a way that work is play and effort is fun. Activity with joy is action; action with no joy is activity. Each task can be an action if we enjoyed every moment without thinking of where to go next.

It is the way a child tackles her work enjoying each moment, not worried about how soon her work is to be finished, not worried about how the work is going to look after it is done. If you ask a child to wash a bowl, have you seen what he does? He will play with the water, blow bubbles with the soap water and what not. Finally he will wash the bowl and keep it. An adult mind can never do this. There is rarely enjoyment in what we do; there is just the attitude of getting over with it, even if it is doing something pleasurable. We are driven all the time, not knowing where to.

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Actually if you notice, children can sit by themselves doing nothing sometimes. They will just be sitting and babbling something. It is we adults who find it difficult to sit not doing anything. We feel urgency all the time. What

for? We are so afraid to sit by ourselves and do nothing for even a minute. I tell you, if you sit by yourself and touch base with yourself at least once, if you get a taste of it just once, you will understand the purposelessness of life itself and you will stop running.

You will understand that life is not about any activity, any goal, any purpose, any achievement, but it is about enjoying the oneness with Existence, enjoying your center within. When you understand this, then, expressions of this enjoyment will start happening automatically. You will start doing things that are beautiful expressions of your experience within, which are expressions of your joy in feeling the oneness with Existence. That is the way things have to happen.

If things happen from your center, you will not be in a hurry; you will not feel any hangovers. But if you do them without any feeling of being centered, then all your actions will be subject to feelings of no fulfillment, hangovers and what not. You will be caught in the cycle of pure outer world actions, one leading to the other.

A small story:

Once, there was a man who was sitting in a boat and needed to reach the other bank of the river in a hurry.

The boatman was doing his best to row the boat as fast as he could.



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But, the man was getting impatient and started walking up and down inside the boat.

After some time, his pace quickened and started rocking the boat.

The boatman requested him to be seated and to allow him to row the boat.

The man replied, 'I have no time! I have to reach the other side soon!'

If we look at ourselves, this is what we too do most of the time. We run inside the boat! We have boarded the boat and the boat will take us to the other side if we sit and relax. Can we reach faster by even a minute if we walk inside the boat? In fact, we might slow down the process of reaching the other side by walking inside the boat. We don't have faith in the power of the boat. We feel we have to walk restlessly, only then can we reach the other side.

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Ramana Maharishi often says a beautiful story:

Once, a man was traveling by train with his luggage on his head.

A fellow passenger asked him why he was carrying the luggage on his head when he could keep it in the train and sit peacefully.

The man replied, 'It will be too heavy for the train!'

The train is carrying him and his luggage already, but the man is in addition carrying the

luggage on his head and burdening himself! In the same way, not only you, but also your mind is being taken care of by the Divine. Only you have to place a little trust on Existence and relax. Do your work in totality and relax; things will be automatically taken care of.

We keep running because we are afraid to stop and reflect on what we are doing and why. We are afraid to be with ourselves. To be silent can be terrifying as it makes one vulnerable to oneself.

People are afraid to meditate because of this fear to be silent. In Zen, meditation is about just sitting still and doing nothing, but consciously sitting still. Stopping the body and mind is like healing the body and mind. It is not any sin to stop the body and mind. Understand that first. You don't have to feel guilty about stopping the body and mind for a few minutes of introspection. The problem is, we have been brought up with so much guilt that we feel guilty about virtually everything. There is nothing wrong in introspection. Just try it once a day; you will become growingly aware of your core. When this happens, you will start to understand the whole show and all your feelings of guilt will also dissolve with it.



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Opening our mind to Intuition

Let me narrate to you an incident that actually happened:

In one of the Nithyananda Spurana meditation programs that I conduct, which is the second level of meditation program that we have after the first level of *chakra* energization course called Ananda Spurana Program (ASP), we had a lady who was terrified of eating ice creams.

At the very thought of an ice cream, let alone eating one, she used to contract a cold. While speaking to her, I found that the basis of this trauma lay in her childhood.

When she was a child, her mother used to tell her that she would get a cold every time she wanted to eat an ice cream. This thought was embedded in her unconscious and even after she grew up, the fear was so powerful that she used to get a cold at the very thought of an ice cream.

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This is the power of the unconscious. I advised her to eat an ice cream to her heart's content without any fear, and told her that I will take care of anything that happened. She followed my words and ate an ice cream. She found that after that, her fear of eating ice creams left her

totally and she did not contract a cold either. She was simply thrilled. She felt she had overcome a large obstacle in life.

When the fear of the ice cream was brought to conscious awareness from the unconscious, it simply disappeared, that's all, nothing else.

As we saw earlier, our mind works at three levels: instinct, intellect and intuition. When working through instinct, our mind decides by negative memory, unconsciously.

For example, if as a child, we have had a bad experience in a hospital, we may associate that unpleasant experience with the white clothing of doctors and nurses. Every time we come across a white dress, say of a nurse or some other uniformed person in another environment, we would be disturbed without knowing the reason why. This is an instinctive behavior.

When working through the intellect, we work at a conscious level but not energetically, not enthusiastically; we work as a computer, as a robot, running to logic for every small or big thing.

However, when working at the level of intuition, we suddenly know what is right. We may have minimum data, no precedence to support our decisions; but we know. We are presented with many choices and suddenly one pops up. Intuition not only gives us the power to decide but also the energy to implement the decision.



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When we work at the level of intuition, we will feel rejuvenated at the end of the day.

People ask me, 'Master, how do we know whether our decisions are instinctive, intellectual or intuitive?'

Be very clear: If you feel guilty, you are operating at the instinct level; if you are confused, you are operating at the intellect level. When you are in the intuition level, you will be very clear about your decisions and they will also provide you the energy to go ahead; you will feel light and blissful.

So how can we awaken this intuition? All you need to do is to give your conscious mind a rest. You may ask, 'how'?

Let me explain: We live between two levels of 'I' consciousness and two levels of thoughts.

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B L I S S I S T H E G O A L A N D T H E P A T H

Just look at this diagram here:

Various States of Consciousness		
	With thoughts	Without thoughts
With "I" Consciousness	Jagrath Wakefull State Thinking	Thuriya Blissfull State State of full Awarness
Without "I" Consciousness	Swapna Dream State Dreaming	Susupthi Unconscious State Deep sleep



When we are awake, we operate with self-awareness or 'I' consciousness and thoughts in us. In Sanskrit this is called the *jagrat* state. This is the state normally referred to as the conscious or waking state, since we are seemingly aware of what we do and what is going on around us when we are in this state. Whatever decisions we take in this state are based on logic and rationale.

The second state that we operate in daily is one where we are not at all conscious of ourselves, that is the 'I' awareness is absent, but thoughts are there. This is the state we are in when we are dreaming in our sleep. This state is referred to as the subconscious state – the state with no 'I' consciousness but with thoughts. In Sanskrit this is called the *swapna* state.

A third state, which too is a daily occurrence, is the state of deep sleep in which we have neither 'I' consciousness nor thoughts. This is called the unconscious state. In Sanskrit it is called *sushupti*.

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There is a fourth and final state which most of us are not familiar with. During this state of our existence, we have no thoughts at all. However, we are fully aware; the 'I' consciousness remains totally active. In Sanskrit, this state of the mind is called *turiya* or *samadhi*. This is actually a no-mind state, where the 'I' exists but with no thoughts. This is the state of enlightened Masters.

Modern psychology is not even aware of this state. This state is the state of meditation or intuition or thoughtless awareness. If we can enter this fourth state, we can experience creativity, courage, confidence; we can take spontaneous decisions; we then take responsibility; we can decide based on very limited data with no precedence; we get the power and courage to do anything. Our relationships can change.

Often in relationships, we tend to make a judgment first and then collect arguments to support the judgment through our unconscious, reactive, instinctive level of the mind.

Two men were talking about their wives across the table having tea together.

One man said, 'Whatever I do she always sees me through her pre-conceived notions. She never wants to see things as they are. She never wants to hear both sides of the argument. He then asked, 'How is your wife, by the way?'

The other man replied, 'Well, my wife will listen to both sides of an argument. But only if the argument is on at the neighbor's flat.'

We are all like this most of the time. We rarely see a person with a fresh perception. We see only those arguments that support our pre-conceived judgment of that person. If you scan your life and see how many times you have done this, you will understand what I am trying to



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say. This is what I call selective amnesia: just remembering the things that support your preconceived notions and judgments. Anyhow, this is how relationships suffer, when we act out of instinct or intellect.

How can we differentiate between intuition and instinct? When we act instinctively, we feel drained. For instance, when we react in anger, we feel guilt. But when we act intuitively, out of just resonating with Existence, we feel energized. We are in command in a very enjoyable way.

People ask me, 'Master, how do you have so much energy? You heal so many people but at the end of the day, you have the same energy that you started with.'

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Let me tell you: If you operate from the level of intuition, you will have access to boundless energy. You will not feel tired after doing something; you are totally in tune with Existence and the energy of the entire cosmos opens up to you. When you do something wholeheartedly, you don't feel tired or for that matter, proud of having done a great service or sacrifice. You accept and welcome everyone and everything in life with a deep sense of gratitude. You realize that life itself is a great gift to you from Existence and that humility makes you do everything with love and compassion.

You may ask: Where does intuition come from?

It comes from you, from within you, from no one else, from nowhere else.

How many times you would have experienced it yourself! When you hear the phone, you suddenly remember someone and she is there on the line. You think of some one at a party and then you see him that very day in some other place.

To many of my audience, such experiences have happened. When we know how something happens, we call it an incident; if we don't know how some thing happens, we say it is a coincidence. There is never a coincidence in life. It is just that we don't understand the cause and effect of the events, so we call it a coincidence.

What happens is, knowingly or unknowingly, we fall into this fourth state of thoughtless awareness whenever you are really rested, when you are really in bliss, for just a few seconds. When you fall into this state, for those few moments, you are at the intuitive level. This happens to us more often than we realize. The problem is that we just do not encourage this in us and so we don't fall into this state consciously at all; we fall into it accidentally. It is something like this: If you do not encourage a child to speak, it will stop speaking. Whenever we experience this intuition in us, we have fallen into a meditative state just for those few moments. But we discard it as a coincidence or call it a miracle and move on; that is the



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problem. Most of the discoveries of scientists have happened when they simply fell or stumbled into moments such as these.

In the waking state you can control your thoughts, though it may be difficult. You can divert your thoughts from unpleasant to more pleasant thoughts. It is always your choice to be with thoughts or not, and what kind of thoughts you want to be with.

In the dream state, if you try to control your thoughts you will wake up. If you dream that you are being chased by some one with a knife, just at the point when the attacker reaches you, you will wake up, perhaps screaming. Dreams are a catharsis. Catharsis is a process of letting go of your suppressions. Suppressions need to be let off. Dreams are the let off mechanism.

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Modern day psychologists talk of the harvesting power of dreams. These are very dangerous practices. If you do not rest in your dreams, you will be in trouble. Sometimes you wake up in the middle of a dream with a solution to a problem you went to sleep with. If you feel energized at this point, then go with it; your solution is intuitive. If you feel drained out, you are damaging your dream process. So stop this practice.

Let the energy at your unconscious level emerge. When this opens up, whatever you suppress will come out and then pure energy will emerge.

This process of thoughtless awareness will activate your intuition. This higher-level energy heals you physically, emotionally and mentally. It helps you to decide spontaneously as to how to process the data without using your intellect. This process is called meditation. It tunes your intellect with this higher energy.

Whenever you find time, give an appointment to yourself; some part of your being wants to express itself more. We never give our being time. We are always ready to give appointments to other people, but never ready to give appointment to ourselves. The moment I ask you to meditate for 30 minutes, those thirty minutes become the most precious, most unaffordable time in your daily life. Until then, you would have been wasting so much of time, much more than 30 minutes on other useless things. But when I say that you have to sit down and meditate, you will come up with the excuse that you don't have time. This is because we are so ignorant of what we really *need*. Meditation is a basic need for us.

A man asked me the other day, 'Swami, can we use intuition in a corporate team environment?'

You can certainly use intuition in a team environment. It can work very well in a team environment. Intuition will always be complementary. You do not have to worry about creating any conflict. There is conflict only when you cannot look another person in the eye,



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when you cannot be honest. When you are intuitive, you have the power to be honest. You have the power to create the path to reach others. Your intellect gets sharpened to express yourself intelligently.

Normally we do not trust our own being. From a young age, we are not allowed to believe in ourselves. We do not trust ourselves. It is said that the strength of a chain is determined by its weakest link. You cannot apply the same thing to yourself. We always judge ourselves by the weakest moments of our lives. This is not the right way to treat ourselves.

Only because we do this, we lose faith in ourselves. Only because we do this, we don't have enough courage to explore the intuition hidden in us. Why not measure yourself with the strongest experience you have had? After all, your strongest experience has already proven and given you a glimpse of the immense potential that you have, is it not? So why settle for anything less? Be courageous and don't set any limits on your capacity.

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Don't be a prisoner of the past; be the architect of your future. Make your own destiny because you are the only person who can and will make it. I always tell people: Don't come to me to predict your future. Come to me if you wish to change your future! I can guide you to change your future. Always remember: When you give incentive and inspiration to the sparks of

possibility, they will grow into the flames of big achievements.

You do not trust your being, your body intelligence. For example, the moment you have a headache, what do you do? You simply take a pill. You do not even try to see the underlying symptoms, the signs that your body is trying to give you about what the problem is. You don't have the openness to try to relate with your body and watch the headache disappear on its own. The headache can disappear on its own; it is perfectly possible. You do not have to believe what I say. I am not asking you to believe; I am just asking you to be open and to trust.

If you receive with an open and inquisitive and curious mind, you will experiment with these ideas and see for yourself. To know the taste of an apple, even a thousand words will not be sufficient to describe it completely and accurately. All you need to do is to have a bite. You don't have to believe that the sun rises in the east; you see it everyday with your eyes. Similarly, experiment with these ideas and know for yourself.

Too much questioning makes us schizophrenic. Jesus says, 'Love thy neighbor as you love yourself'. However, we do not love ourselves. We need to first love ourselves. Only then, we can integrate ourselves.



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The peak of intellect is intelligence. The peak of intelligence is intuition. Our conscious mind works against intuition since it poses a risk to the mind and intellect. Mind is always counter-intuitive. You need to jump before you think; otherwise you will never jump. You have to stop thinking before you can jump intuitively.

A successful CEO's book becomes a Bible, a law. Not always are his words intuitive, they are mostly informative, coming from intellect and not replicable by others. Yet people believe, because it appeals to logic. Life is not logical. The benchmark of intuition is totality, real happiness, inside as well as outside, not logic.

There is no separation between the inner and outer world. It is the inner world that is projected as the outer world, whether you believe it or not, accept it or not, want it or not. Your being is the only world. You start creating and you forget you are creating. When your desires come true, you say they are not yours.

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Before inviting, you don't realize whom you are inviting. Till things come up at the conscious level, you don't realize what you are asking for at the unconscious level. Accidents are created by us. They do not just happen. You are tuning into incidents, tuning into possibilities of your life.

Just like the antenna attracts the satellite waves, your mental setup attracts the life incidents towards you.

If you are blissful, people with a similar attitude will be attracted towards you. If you are dull, lethargic and depressed, the same type of people will be attracted towards you. You will fall in line with the people who have the same mental setup. You attract the same nature of incidents.

In fact, this is something that has been gaining ground and visibility even in the field of science. Some of the laws and observations of quantum physics are proving that the act of observation itself plays a major role in the result, in how the object is seen.

In the same way, in life, at every moment, we are presented with infinite possibilities. We don't seem to see all of them though, because we are the ones who have restricted our vision to this small keyhole made up of our past experiences. We choose to see the present through the lens of the past; so we don't see the present as it is. We see it distorted by the filter of the past.

We accumulate from birth, or mental attitudes from previous births, desires, beliefs and value systems without any logic or awareness. Studies on children have shown that till adolescence, their brain wave patterns are in the theta, delta and alpha modes, which are all the sub conscious modes of high suggestibility. In fact, memories start getting collected in the womb and parental activities influence the mind of the infant.

Whatever we do in adult life is influenced by these carried over memories, which are emotion



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filled and highly influential, which is what we refer to as *samskara*. *Samskara* rule our lives, not just our rational thinking.

Our perceptions of the future are all based on our conclusions of our past. It is all distorted by our experiences of the past. These memories of the past that are stored and retrieved by the subconscious and unconscious mind simply put their signature on whatever we see around us continuously. As a result, we see what we want to see rather than what is there in reality.

In a fish-tank, the bubbles arise continuously from the bottom of the tank in a vertical fashion, but at the surface, you see a number of bubbles floating around near each other. These bubbles have no connection horizontally or vertically; all they share is the source from which they arise. Similarly, in our mind, any two thoughts are absolutely independent and have nothing in common between them except their origin. We, however, connect our experiences and create a non-existent shaft of random thoughts. While connecting, depending on whether we seek pain or pleasure at that moment, we try to make a shaft of pain by correlating all random painful thoughts or make a shaft of pleasure by connecting all random thoughts that give us pleasure. This shaft is purely imaginary but we give it so much life and allow it to control us.

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We need to understand and internalize the fact that these thoughts, memories and desires have

no substance. They are not real in the present moment. In the present moment all that is real is what happens to you at that moment; not what happened before or what will happen later. This is the only way to take control of your life. Just be in the present.

Whether you believe it not, life is totally under your control. Intuition through meditation is the way to bring it under control. So, take charge of your life because you are the only one who can live it!



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Shifting the Doors of Perception

One lady called up the fire department and frantically said, 'Sir, I have spent a fortune just a few months ago redoing my garden and...'

The fire department person asked, 'Where is the fire ma'am?'

The lady continued, 'My husband is already screaming at me for not maintaining the garden well...'

The person from the fire department interrupted, 'Madam, can you tell us where the fire is.'

The lady continued, 'Tomorrow, I have called the garden service over for maintenance...'

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The man got very impatient and asked, 'Ma'am, this is not the garden service number; this is the fire department. Can you tell me where the fire is.'

The lady said, 'The fire is in the house next door and I don't want your men messing around my garden when they come over.'

Just like this lady, who is more worried about her garden when there was a fire raging in her neighbor's house, we are all selfish and

insensitive most of the time. She is able to see only her garden, not the fire in the neighbor's house!

All our thoughts are centered only on us. We only see what we wish to see and do. In Sanskrit, we have two terms to explain why we see what we see. *Drishti Shrishti* is when we see things as we want them to be. *Shrishti Drishti* is what we perceive if we can see them as they are. Most often, we have already made up our minds about what we wish to see. We see things only the way our mind wants us to see them.

This is a real incident that has been recorded in history:

When Columbus was approaching the shores of America, his ship could be seen on the horizon a few days before it actually came to the shore. Surprisingly, the native Indians could not 'see' the ship even though it was on the horizon since a few days. They had never seen something close to what a ship looked like ever before. So, the mind could not comprehend what it could be to the extent that they never even noticed its presence.

The perception of the new object failed to produce any hits in the database of the mind and this led to non-recognition and non-acceptance of the new object.

When we see things as we want them to be, we produce supporting facts for our judgment.



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We judge first and then we collect arguments to support our judgment. We first decide whether we like a person or not. Then, we collect facts in support of that decision. Only the facts that support the already made judgment are retained. Any facts against the judgment, however many in number, are rejected for one reason or another. We twist our observation to suit our perception. This leads to ignorance and suffering.

99% of the time, your judgment is ready. For example, your son comes home late by a few hours. You make a judgment about him. You are not going to accept any of his explanations. It can't shake your judgment. On the contrary, you will only try to pick the arguments to support your judgment. After that incident, whatever he does, you will always be biased by your previous judgment.

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Similarly, after living with your wife for a few months, you will create a concept about her. Then, whatever she does, you pick up only those arguments that support your judgment.

The way in which our perception works is very deceiving to us. When a desire is fulfilled, we no longer have joy in its possession. If you look at your own life, you will understand what I am trying to say:

You see your neighbor's brand new Mercedes and you yearn to possess the same car.

BLISS IS THE GOAL AND THE PATH

You work hard, driven by the strong desire to possess the car and in the hope that all your efforts will enable you to buy the car soon.

One day, you are in a position where you can afford to buy the car and you go to the showroom.

You are very happy to lay your hands on your Mercedes.

You drive out of the showroom, feeling on top of the world.

Then, you are waiting at the red light and happen to look out of the side-window to see someone sitting in a bright red Ferrari.

All the joy that you had in possessing your new Mercedes just vanishes in a jiffy as the thought creeps into your head, 'How beautiful this Ferrari is. Only now I have got a Mercedes and now look at this Ferrari!'

All the hours of toil that you invested in the hope of enjoying a new car just pale into the background and all that stands out is the new desire to possess a Ferrari. The running starts again in the hope of the future. Hardly a few moments are spent in enjoying the present!

Acquisition makes us solid; we become dull, we take the possession for granted and we stop enjoying what we have. We take all that we have been given including our very life for



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granted. How many times have we appreciated and thanked Existence for giving us this wonderful life that enables us to enjoy everything? From the morning rising sun to the people who have made our lives so rich, we simply take all these things for granted.

The same feeling applies to what we learn also; all the acquired knowledge or skills. Once mastered, our skills are taken for granted.

Rich people have money but rarely do they have happiness; they are constantly afraid of losing their wealth. Poor people don't have this kind of problem. They are happy to be alive. Their perspective of life is very basic and much larger than money. Of course, poverty brings its own worries, but there will be a certain carefree-ness in poor people, because there is no fear of losing anything! There is nothing to lose! It is a liberating feeling if you really go to see.

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The more you have, the more suffering because greater is the fear and insecurity of losing it. So in a way poor people are more peaceful although their poverty pains them at times. I am not saying it is good to be poor, no! I am only talking about perceptions here. Try to understand.

The concept of 'I' and 'mine' bring only misery and suffering. The more one seeks 'mine', the more the burden, the more the suffering. The greed for acquiring something in the future never

brings happiness. Enjoyment of what one has, however little it is, at the present moment, brings true happiness.

A beautiful small story:

Once, Narada, a devotee of Lord *Vishnu*, the Hindu God who protects and sustains the Universe, was going to *Vaikunta* (abode of Lord *Vishnu*).

On the way, he saw a *yogi* - man who does spiritual practices - sitting and meditating.

The *yogi* asked Narada, 'Oh Narada, please ask *Vishnu* how long I have to wait. When will I become enlightened?'

Narada said, 'Surely I will ask' and he went on his way.

Again, on the way, there was one more person who was just jumping and dancing under a tree.

He asked Narada, 'Oh Narada, please ask *Vishnu* when I will have his *darshan* (appearance).'

He said, 'Please tell Him to grace me. How long should I wait for His grace?'

Narada said, 'I will ask him, don't worry.'

Narada went to *Vaikunta* and came back with the replies.



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The *yogi* asked him what the Lord said.

Narada said, 'The Lord told me that you will have to wait for 4 more *janmas* (lives of birth and death) to become enlightened.'

The *yogi* simply fell into depression, 'Oh, 4 *janmas*! What will I do?'

The other man who was dancing, jumping around, asked Narada, 'What did God say to me?'

Narada said, 'God told me that you have to wait for as many *janmas* as there are leaves on this tree. Only then, you will become enlightened; only then will His grace come upon you.'

The moment the man heard this, he said 'Oh! That is all right. I don't care how long I have to wait. He gave me the assurance that He will grace me; that is enough'.

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He started jumping and dancing again. The moment he uttered this, lightning struck and the Divine descended; he became enlightened!

The so-called spiritual man was still caught up in the workings of the mind, of hankering after desires. Even though these may be lofty spiritual desires in the eyes of society, these are desires nevertheless. The other man was just enjoying life in the present and did not mind the wait.

He was happy with just the assurance that the

divine grace would someday lead him beyond. This ultimate trust will automatically lead to fulfillment.

These days, people change things so often. They change their car once in 6 months, change house once in two years and change even their wives or husbands! This happens because we are never happy with what we have. We think happiness and contentment are connected to things in the outer world. No! It is something that happens within us; it is a state within us irrespective of what happens outside.

Let me explain:

You have a great desire to eat a particular sweet. When you eat that sweet you feel joy. If you associate that feeling of joy to the sweet, you wish to eat more of that sweet. If you keep eating more and more of it, at one point in time after some sweets do you think you will feel the same joy? No! You will feel revulsion, not joy; you will not be able to eat any more. If your joy was associated with that sweet, then you should be able to eat as many sweets as possible and feel the same joy, is it not? But that is not the case. Understand: Your joy is not associated with the sweet.

What is it that gave you the joy then?

When you feel that you are enjoying an object, the moment that object is near you, the number of thoughts in your mind reduces, and when the



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number of thoughts per second reduces, when your TPS (thoughts per second) falls low, a feeling of joy permeates within you because you are near your center, your core. It is because of this that you experience this inner joy.

But instead of associating this feeling of joy with the reduced thoughts in your mind, with the subject, you associate it with the object, that is the sweet. Whenever the frequency of thoughts comes down, you experience bliss.

Because we associate joy with outer world things, we are very easily subject to sway from happiness towards misery. Many people perceive life itself as a great misery.

A small story:

A lady had just finished sending her six children to school, washed the clothes, swept and mopped the house and was going to have her lunch with sweat on her brow when the door bell rang.

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She opened the door and found two men dressed like preachers standing at the doorstep.

They told her, 'Ma'am, if you can spare us two minutes, we will tell you how to live till eternity.'

The lady looked at them and said, 'I don't think I can handle it.'

Life itself seems like a punishment to us because we have not found the inner happiness,

the happiness of the soul. A general feeling of discontent and misery sets in because of this and we blame life for everything. Everything is in our mind, but we blame life for it. Because of this general feeling, we feel others are more blessed than us.

A small story:

Two ladies were talking to each other over a cup of tea.

The first one asked, 'Does your husband love you?'

The second one replied, 'I think so. Why do you ask?'

The first one said, 'Well, I always thought we were like desserts for these men.'

The second one could not understand what she was saying. She asked, 'Desserts? What do you mean?'

The first one said, 'Well, they order for their desserts after considerable choice and when the desserts arrive they always feel the other's dessert looks better.'

From small things to big ones, we never realize the worth of what we have and what we are till we are at the point of losing our possessions and ourselves. We always have an undercurrent of dissatisfaction in us.

When we are on the brink of losing our possessions, we start realizing and start



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scrambling after our wonderful possessions. We always feel what we had was more beautiful than what we have now, that the past was golden and the present is not so great. But when that past was present, we would not have felt that it was golden, we would have said the same thing about the previous past, that's all! This is how we always function, deluding ourselves all the time.

Just like the vision in our eyes extends only to 120 degrees, our mental vision is also very limited. Life is 360 degrees; remember that. By confining ourselves to this 120-degree vision and restricting ourselves to a limited enjoyment, we become solid and dull, without joy.

Because of our habit of seeing things in a limited fashion, seeing things through a negative frame of mind, we miss the joys of life. But this has become the normal code of conduct in society, to talk of one's problems endlessly, to be dissatisfied, to seek for more. As long as each one is immersed in his or her own problems, life seems to be all right and everyone is happy; not really happy but happy that each one has got problems.

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If people see us being serious, they think we are ok. If we laugh without reason, they think we are crazy. By being serious, we make our life our graveyard. Scientifically, it has been shown that the number of muscles that are to be kept tense in order to frown are much more than the number of muscles that are tensed when you have a good laugh!

I tell you, people who are against life are the ones who find it difficult to laugh. Laughter is life; love, song, dance, all these are life. In laughter, you include everything and everyone. In your grief, you are alone. Laughter is all encompassing. When you grieve, you are stuck somewhere; it is excluding. But society strangely feels good when you grieve. It is too much for society if you laugh.

Society tells you that you are mad if you laugh for everything. It cannot bear to see you simplify things with your laughter, because if you simplify things, then society becomes powerless. As long as you are not laughing, society has a control over you. If you start laughing, society cannot handle you. You go out of its control. That is why children are often suppressed if they laugh too much.

Children are always liquid, always full of joy; they are intelligent. They are curious, always learning; they never think that their learning is over. They never take things for granted; everything is new for them: each sunrise, each tree and each flower. They do not need a reason to laugh; they are so spontaneous.

A small story:

A 40-year-old father was dyeing his greying hair.

His child, watching him curiously, asked him, 'Dad, why is your hair white when mine is all black?'



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The father replied, 'Every time a person tells a lie, one hair turns white and after some time, in this fashion a lot of hair become white.'

The child promptly turned around and looked at her grandfather and shouted out, 'What a big liar my grandfather must be!'

This is how innocent and open children are! Intelligence is simplicity; it is also spontaneity and innocence. When we try to be intellectual, we are trying to impress people with our knowledge and not with our wisdom. We force ourselves into highly complex and convoluted logic just to show that we know better.

The problem is that we absorb knowledge only partially. What happens when you eat a lot and are not able to digest it? It will lead to indigestion and you will just vomit your partly digested food on others without absorbing anything! The same thing happens with partly digested knowledge. You just spew it on others without internalizing anything.

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Intelligence, on the other hand, is spontaneous; it is fresh. In the *gurukul* (traditional schooling) system in ancient India, what was valued was intelligence and not intellect. There were many child sages, who were celebrated, not just old men. The greatest guru of them all, Dakshinamurthy, is always portrayed as a young boy teaching a number of older sages. There was no linkage that was seen between age and wisdom.

A small Zen story:

A Zen master had to choose his successor.

He drew a small black dot on a white board and called all his disciples together.

He then asked them to tell him what they saw.

Almost all of the disciples said that they saw the black dot.

One disciple alone told him, 'I see a huge expanse of white, in which there is a small black dot.' He was chosen as the successor.

Most of us are not able to actually see all that is visible to us. Our brain interprets just 2% of the images that the eyes send and that corresponds to what matches our expectations from the past.

In the same way, as we get tired of what we have and what we have learnt, all of us forget all the good things that happen to us; we take them for granted. We only remember the negative incidents that make us feel dissatisfied and unhappy. Actually this is the truth. The mind strangely recounts only the hardships, the moments of pain more easily than the moments of joy and pleasure. This is because of the deep and unconscious training that has gone into us.

By and by, we start talking of our problems in a big way with a lot of pride that we are managing such great problems! We boast that we are on sleeping pills or antidepressants or



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whatever. Our mind, our ego makes us feel big when we have big problems. Actually if you observe, the bigger our problems, the more important and solid we feel. We may not accept it but you will see that when people talk about their problems or hardships, and how they tackled them, they will talk with so much zest in them. The zest is an indication of the ego in handling the problems.

Over time, children learn these from us; it is nothing but neuro-linguistic programming handed down from one generation to another as a liability, not as an asset! We influence each other in this negativity. I tell you, share your sorrow; sharing reduces your sorrow in a way because you give vent to it when you share. Share your happiness as well, since sharing increases your happiness. Often, for fear of arousing envy or jealousy and constrained by what we believe to be the evil eye, we avoid sharing happiness.

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All these are foolish things that we do. Don't ever be carried away by things like the 'evil eye'. If you cast your eyes properly on yourself and live with awareness, no one can cast any eye on you. This is the truth. Stop believing in these superstitious things. Start feeling the power within you, the energy within you, then, automatically you will stop thinking about the power that others can wield over you. You believe in all these things only because you don't feel strong enough within yourself.

So, share all the good things of life. Sharing is the basis of *satsangs*, a meeting of spiritual people. When a group of people get together with good intentions, for the purpose of sharing goodness, for the purpose of doing good to others, there is enormous positive group energy that uplifts everybody. We rarely realize how powerful words are. If we listen to good words, we find peace; just being in the company of good people, just hearing good words being exchanged, even if we are not aware, brings peace to us.

Those who are in professions that deal with a lot of negativity should take precautions. They should work towards building positive energy. Doctors particularly should be careful. They should meditate; they have so much negativity being poured into them. If you go to a hospital, you feel you are being drained of energy because the atmosphere is low on positive energy. In the same way that doctors are particular about washing their hands, they should also wash their minds. What we think, we become. We must work at building positive energy within us.

The problem is that we find it difficult to be spontaneous with others. We find it necessary to be guarded; we find it necessary to guard our ego.

Even if you have to go to meet a friend, you prepare what to discuss, what to do. This is because you have no strength to face the situation with spontaneity. So, you write a script



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and just enact that. If something happens that does not conform to your script, you struggle to handle the situation. If you understand that Existence is your friend and it deeply cares for you, you will not feel the need to live according to a script. Instead, you will have tremendous courage and trust and you will live life spontaneously; instead of just reliving life as you are doing now, over and over again on the same worn out path; you will actually live your life in bliss.

When we look at ourselves and others, we tend to look down, not up. By looking up towards high standards, we grow. By focusing on negatives, we drag ourselves down. That is why we even say that getting attracted to some one deeply is 'falling in love'. If it were truly an uplifting emotion, we ought to be 'rising' in love, not falling!

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All the fanaticism that is going around us is just ways of guarding our ego: Men against women, one religion against another, the rich against the poor and so on. Just let go of your ego. The feeling of separation will disappear. You will be liberated.

Only those who are rigid, those who cannot forgive and forget, are the ones who suffer. They are caught in their web of morality and ethics and they find it difficult to forgive themselves for what they consider lapses in behavior. This anger and guilt settles within them and corrodes them.

Also, do not try to be perfectionists; nature itself stands testimony to that. Nature is so diverse and each creation is so unique, but not perfect in your sense of perfection. But it is total! It has such a totality and fulfillment in itself, is it not? This is what I mean when I say, 'Be Total'.

A beautiful small story:

A water bearer had two large pots, one hung on each end of a pole.

He used to carry the two pots everyday to the river nearby, fill them up with water and then carry them slung on the pole across his neck to his master's house.



One of the pots was a normal pot and capable of carrying the water filled to its brim.

The other pot had a crack in it and half the water in it spilt on the way from the river to the master's house.

The water bearer, however, did not mind and he used to carry the one and a half pots of water to his master's house everyday.

Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, as it fulfilled the design for which it was made.

The cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection and miserable that it was unable to accomplish what it had been made for.

Day by day, the cracked pot felt more and more miserable.

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Finally, one day, when the water bearer was filling it with water from the river, it said, 'I am ashamed of myself and am really sorry for having to put you through this.'

The water bearer asked, surprised, 'What are you feeling sorry about?'

The cracked pot replied, 'Everyday, you fill me up with water to the brim. But, I have been able to carry only half of it because this crack in my side causes the water to leak out. Because of my flaws, you have not been able to get the full benefit of all your hard work.'

The water bearer felt sorry for the cracked pot and told it lovingly, 'As we return to the master's house, I want you to notice the beautiful flowers along the path today.'

As the water bearer went to his master's house, the cracked pot noticed the warm rays of the sun falling on the beautiful, glistening flowers on the path and it was happy.

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However, when they reached the house, it remembered the old feeling of not being useful and was again ashamed and sorry that it had leaked out half the water in it. It apologized to the water bearer again.

The water bearer said, 'Did you not notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path and not on the other pot's side?'

The cracked pot said, 'Yes.'

The water bearer continued, 'Everyday while we walked back from the river, the water that leaked from you has watered the flowers. Only because of that, I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the master's table. Without you being just the way you are, the beauty in his house would not have been the way it is.'

Each of us have flaws. We are all like the cracked pot. But, we have to remember that we are all God's unique creations. If you think you are not good enough, you are saying that God is not the perfect energy. Don't be afraid of your flaws. They are not really flaws. They are just the way you are. Acknowledge them and you can bring something beautiful to life.

To do this, you need to start loving yourself, your body, your disposition; start becoming aware of your body language, and it will become beautiful. Make this as a meditation and do it whenever you remember it. People ask me when they should do meditation. The best way to do any such meditation is whenever you remember it. Of course it is good to allot a certain time for it so that you don't miss doing it, but if you make it your all-time meditation, it will become your very nature, which is what you want it to become!

Life is continuously teaching you and that too, by the most powerful and effective means, that of experiences. It is up to you to open your eyes and ears and absorb these, rather than being judgmental and that too, based on your intellect.



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If you put all the people in this world in a line with the so-called best in the beginning of the line and the so-called worst in your opinion at the last, where will you stand? Most probably, you will be somewhere in the middle. You are neither going to stand out as the best nor are you going to stand as the most worthless person. If you are going to be somewhere in the middle of the line, then it is up to you to decide whether you want to look in front and feel sorry for yourself or to look behind and decide to make the best of what you have been gifted with.

There are some people who take life as it comes; they let go of things, including what we think are principles, morals and ethics. They have no guilt, no regrets. They are happy. Being moralistic does not make you happy; in fact, it makes you suffer because you wish to enjoy but are not courageous enough to enjoy. You suppress your wants and emotions. These suppressed emotions are dangerous like dormant volcanoes. We need to face our desires and emotions and manage them. The only way to do this is through conscious awareness. The only way to reach conscious awareness is through meditation.

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God is one who remembers one good thing we did and forgives and forgets millions of bad things we do. Man is one who remembers the one bad thing of others and forgets million other good things! Such is the mentality of man.

We have no right to judge people. The sense of virtue and sin itself is a creation of society. That is why one thing is regarded in one society as a

virtue and the same is considered a sin in some other society. Polygamy is considered to be alright in some societies while in some others, it is condemned. The laws of society are not ultimate truths. Rather, they are time-bound as they get created according to the needs and conditions of the given time and place. When you forget what went behind the making of that law, you start believing it with no reason to back it and get caught in the web of tradition.

A small story:

There was a monastery where Lord Siva was worshipped.

The Master had a cat and it was so close to him that he allowed it to jump on him during the worship and disturb the daily worship.

When the cat became too playful, the Master would instruct his disciples to place the cat inside a basket during worship.

This became a daily routine.

One day the Master passed away. The cat ran away that night.

The next morning, the successor to the Master took over the proceedings, the daily routines etc.

Before starting the daily worship, he asked where the cat was.

On finding that the cat was missing, he declared, 'We cannot do the worship without the cat'.



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The disciples tried to catch other cats but did not succeed and eventually, they stopped performing the worship!

They were under the impression that the cat was part of the ritual in the worship! This is how most of us blindly follow tradition and norms without understanding the underlying reasons why they came about.

Once caught in the web of religion, we don't want to miss out on anything related to it. We don't want to leave out anything for fear of doing something wrong, for fear of being the odd one out. Such is the control religion wields over us.

A Vicar in a particular church was concluding his sermon for the Sunday.

He announced, 'Next week, my sermon will be on Truthfulness. On getting back home, I want all of you to read the twenty-ninth chapter of Leviticus which is on truthfulness.'

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The following week, the vicar started his sermon. But before that he asked, 'Last week I had requested all of you to read the twenty-ninth chapter of Leviticus. How many of you read it?'

Almost all the hands went up.

The Vicar said, 'Just as I had expected. And this is why today's sermon is on truthfulness. Leviticus has only twenty-seven chapters in it!'

How many godheads and priests are willing to deal with the truth in such a jovial way? They

only want to stuff their ideologies down our throat and they don't care how much we have assimilated and what needs to be done to turn our lessons into our own experience. The preachers should put religion in the right perspective to people. That is what they are meant to do.

Vivekananda says beautifully, 'May you flood your religion with logic and reasoning. Whatever withstands these, let it stay; let the others be washed away. The sooner it is washed away, the better it is for mankind.'

Do not worry about what people think of you. Drop preconceived notions about time and place like 'office is hell', 'beach is fun', 'mornings are tough', 'evenings are cool' and what not. Then, you will be happy wherever you are, whenever it is. Live and enjoy life as it is. Drop all your prejudices of people including yourself, events, time and place. As long as happiness is bound by time and space, it is not real happiness.

The whole problem is that we bind our happiness to either some time or place or event or person. Can you ever recall being happy without a reason? I tell you: When you know how to be happy without a reason, there will be no question of even recalling! Try to understand this. As long as you tag your happiness with an event, place, person or time, you can recall specific instances of happiness and that too with a yearning that the past was happier.



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When you feel happiness when you are around that person, you will start wanting to possess the person and there the problem starts. It becomes revengeful when you want to possess. Wanting to possess is actually a way of revenge.

Also, you will find that when you try to bring back the time you felt happiness in order to experience the same happiness, somehow it is no longer the same. The joy is lacking. After a few unsuccessful attempts, you feel depressed and sick. You don't feel the energy of happiness.

Once you taste happiness as a permanent state within you irrespective of time, place, event or person, every moment is happy. Where then is the question of recalling anything? You will recall only when you want to relive happy moments, when you unconsciously feel the present is not so happy as the past was. Recalling so-called past happiness is like an energy booster.

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When you recall past happiness, you cerebrally enjoy it once more. But if you feel happiness in your being all the time, there will be no need to recall any past joy. Even if you recall, there will be no yearning in it. It will purely be one more sharing, that's all.

Every 11 days, your emotions go through a complete cycle; that is why the Hindu tradition of *Ekadasi vrata* of fasting on the eleventh day of the waxing and waning moon was introduced. It is to purify yourselves emotionally.

For the next eleven days, think only good things about your body and see how it changes your perception. Just be aware of the greatness of your body. Tell yourself what a beautiful body you have. Feel it while you say it. At the end of it you will see that your body is really beautiful.

It is our perceptions that limit us or liberate us. And this is based on whether we perceive them as they are or as we want them to be. In Tibet, there are communities where a man who is aged a hundred and thirty years is considered young! A 200-year-old man in this community considers himself only middle aged! People live up to three hundred years in that community because of the way they live. They live with limited wants and basic needs. They take nature as it is. Their perceptions of accepting what is given, define their expectations; their expectations in turn make their long life a reality. It is that simple.

It is time to move from the ephemeral to eternal; all we need to do is to deal with things as they are, as we find them, and not try changing them. We need to change ourselves, not others or what is around us. What we need is an internal cognitive shift: from seeing things as we want them to be to seeing things as they are and enjoying life as it is. To bring about this transformation, we need to be aware. Meditation will create this awareness in us.

And let me tell you one thing: When you feel inner happiness, or bliss, your mind relaxes and



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allows your energy to fill your body and mind. When the energy fills you, you get healed and recharged. That is why we say bliss heals.

We have seven energy centers called *chakras* and this has been accepted by many cultures, Sufis, Chinese, and early Christians. Their presence has been proven by Kirlian photography as well. These *chakras* or energy centers, when kept in an energized condition, cause overall well being at the physical and mental levels. It has been studied that these energy centers expand 60 to 70 times and are highly energized with positive emotions.

On the other hand, these *chakras* diminish in size and cause ill health when infused with negative emotions. We can predict diseases through just the diminished aura of the *chakras*. There are also seven glands in our body that are closely associated with these seven *chakras*. And these glands regulate the general well being of a person. When *chakras* are disturbed or locked through negative emotions, they give rise to disease.

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What are the negative emotions we are talking about? We are referring to emotions such as fantasy, fear, worry, etc. Fantasies lock the *Muladhara chakra* located at the base of the spine; fears lock the *Swadhishtana chakra* which is located just below the navel; worries lock the *Manipura chakra* which is located just above the navel; the *Anahata chakra* in the heart region is related to love and attention-need; jealousy locks the *Vishuddhi chakra* in the

throat region; ego blocks the *ajna chakra* which is between the eyebrows and discontentment blocks the *Sahasrara chakra* on top of the head.

When you are blissful, when you have found happiness irrespective of the outer world, then you cannot come under the sway of these emotions. Then your *chakras* remain in a healthy and energized condition. So again, bliss heals!

And bliss provides us the energy to face and solve our problems. Firstly, when you are not blissful, your energy is used to create more problems. When you are blissful, you disconnect from worries and also use the available energy to solve problems. It has been scientifically proven that when dopamine, the chemical associated with bliss is released, the frontal lobe of the brain, which is responsible for decisions, is activated. When this happens, you find that wisdom just flows.

I have worked with two hundred thousand people over the last two years and seen this to be so. You will see a new understanding come up within you. You have never given a chance for bliss to enter your life.

Bliss attracts fortune says *Tantra*. When you are really blissful, you work intuitively, with higher intelligence. Simply decide that you are not going to think about your problems or work on solving your problems, and you will see that a higher intelligence comes into play. Just do this for the next 48 hours. One lesson you will



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learn: Without your awareness, Existence comes in to take over and help you. You will take a quantum leap in your awareness that you do not need to work on your problems to dissolve your problems.

We always question this, based on the assumption that we do not have enough intelligence to solve our problems spontaneously, that we do not have the capacity to produce that spontaneity. But let me tell you: However much you try with your intellect instead of intuition, you will only struggle. So move towards bliss and watch your intellect drop!

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Chapter 5



Listening to Nature's Intelligence

Chaos is Order & Order is Chaos

Mahatma Gandhi said, 'When I admire the wonder of a sunset or the beauty of the moon, my soul expands in worship of the Creator.'

The cosmos, the universe, the vast space that surrounds our home, is so wonder-filled. It is while contemplating our own existence in relation to this vastness beyond, it is in exploration of who we are in comparison with the inestimable space that surrounds us, that ancient sages realized timeless truths. These truths over time became structured and they turned into religions. The truth however remains the same across all the religions.

What has filled man with wonder, made poets sing with joy, painters draw and mystics go deep into themselves, is the orderliness and regularity with which many cosmic events happen and repeat themselves.

As man delved deeper and developed instruments that could see and measure incalculable distances more accurately, this wonder deepened. There was nothing as far as the human could see that regulated this space. There was no one visible entity that controlled and managed this universe. Objects, whether



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they were stars, planets or galaxies, moved in established orbits that rarely varied, yet there were many events within this orderliness that defied prediction.

For example, one of the recent scientific discoveries in quantum physics states that you cannot even measure the exact position of the electron inside an atom, because the very act of measurement would displace it from its position. There was order and yet nothing was predictable 100%; there was no one who seemed to manage this order. In a rational and scientific sense, it was the ideal set up for chaos. When logic fails, chaos is expected to be round the corner, but yet there seemed to be an unperceivable order in the seemingly chaotic happenings in the universe.

We don't understand what is going on. Each new discovery seems to bring us closer, but never close enough for real understanding.

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There are hundreds of scientific theories about the creation of the universe, in addition to the hundreds that various religions have come up with, without any of them having been proven. No one knows till date how it all began. When someone asked Buddha as to who or what created the universe, He replied, 'The Universe creates the Universe. The Universe has its own energy, its own intelligence and its own power to replicate, grow endlessly and evolve limitlessly.'

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There never was a time when it did not exist; there never will be a time when it will not exist. This is the Truth.

Yet, we do not have scientific proof.

The energy in each atom is chaotic. We do not even know in which form the sub-atomic particle exists. The more the scientist studies the nature of sub-atomic particles, the more they seem to be different from the previous understanding. The string theory says that the smallest particles exist only as frequencies. Some say that depending on the viewer and how they are viewed, these particles can be waves, packets, energy or matter or all together at once. The fact is that we still do not know for certain.

The universe, what we call the *Brahmanda* or the macrocosm, is all apparent chaos, totally out of control, without any seeming controller. On the other hand, the individual body, what we call *Pindanda* or the microcosm, is all in apparent order, all under control.

A small joke:

Two drunkards were walking down a street past a halogen lamp.

One of them exclaimed, 'Look! The Sun has come down for us!'

The other replied, 'No, it is night now; it is the moon.'



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The first one continued, 'It is yellow in color and therefore is the sun.'

A third man, who also had consumed liquor, came by them.

They asked him, 'Sir, please tell us whether this is the sun or the moon.'

The man replied, 'I am new to this neighborhood; I do not know.'

Our understanding of the universe is along similar lines! We are still new to the neighborhood, though humankind has existed for many thousand years. The energy in the universe is seemingly chaotic.

However, within this apparent chaos, there is order. Chaos is always exciting and energetic; orderliness is predictable and dull. When you break a rule, you are thrilled; you radiate joy; you exude energy.

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It is man's basic instinct. For example, the moment you see there is no cop or the traffic signal is not working, you start speeding. The moment you see a cop, you reduce the speed.

I am reminded of a speeding joke:

A lady was driving her car very fast, beyond speed limits down a Paris Boulevard.

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He demanded why she was driving at that speed.

The lady hastily replied, 'I am chasing my husband and another woman who are in the car ahead.'

The policeman waved her on, 'After them Madam, after them!'

You see, rules are there alright, but people are looking for the first opportunity to break them. That is the inherent nature of man because man is chaotic by nature. Man is wild energy, conditioned by society and state.

As long as morality is taught with fear as the basis, when morality is instilled in you from the outside, it is only social laws. If it is programmed in your mind right from young age, it is still programming. According to me, conscience is a poor substitute for consciousness. I always tell people it is time for them to drop their toys and become mature.

Rules are toys actually which we break often! We need to outgrow them and be able to look at them in a mature fashion. I am not saying we should not follow rules; no! The rules should not bind us in forceful ways like how toys bind us. Our normal self, our words, our actions, should speak the rules for themselves, not our tongue.

Dancing without rules is joyful; regulated dancing may be pleasing to those who watch,



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but not as joyful to those who perform and those who train to perform. Discipline hurts and that too in dance. Just compare the energy of those dancing in a natural way with spontaneous release of emotions and inhibitions with the energy in dance with orderly movements like in the most reputed classical dance. No one can deny that from the point of view of sheer enjoyment and exuberance of the performer, the classical dancer pales in comparison.

I tell you: when you can dance totally, your dance becomes meditation. There will be an intense order in your chaotic dance, the order of the universe, of Existence that you can simply attain through dance itself. You don't need to learn dance formally to dance totally. In fact, if you have learnt formal dance, it is a hindrance! It will come in the way like old *samskara* and trouble you to come into its familiar order. Once this happens you will not be total, you will be conditioned and pseudo.

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Coming to rules, saying 'no' to rules and regulations that bind us, makes us solid and assertive; saying 'yes', makes us free, makes us liquid, yielding and blissful. When some one smokes, most often, it is for the joy of breaking the rules, rather than anything else.

Why do you think many teen-agers succumb to the temptation to smoke? At the first instance of smoking, there is nothing attractive about it; in fact, the system vigorously rejects the injurious

smoke you are trying to push inside it. But, what do you do? You resist the cough that comes up so that you can prove to others that you are independent, different and are not afraid to break rules; to prove your individuality. The boy thinks he has become a man only when he is able to say 'no' to his parents.

Man loves to be chaotic. As he grows, he loses this passion or rather this passion goes under covers and remains as a dormant volcano which is why at the first opportunity, he is ready to let go. Actually if you observe keenly, even the most meticulous and fastidious people get a silent kick out of breaking rules when the situation calls for it. They may not express it or demonstrate it but their system will feel a slight burp, a slight relief, a silent smirk when they break a rule. So man as a rule is chaotic.

Chaos with 'order' is Cosmic Intelligence. The stars and planets move in order, with no perceivable regulatory authority. Science is yet to find the source of this order. Universe is not just power; it is power combined with Intelligence, which is Energy.

Energy is nothing but intelligence and the whole of Existence is nothing but pure energy. Most of us do not realize this fundamental truth and create problems for ourselves. We think that God, Existence, has only power and no intelligence. We think we are the only creations of God that have intelligence. We feel we are



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the source of all intelligence on planet Earth. We feel the only thing we lack is power. And for that we look to Existence, to God.

That is why we keep praying, 'Give me this; give me that.' We even bargain saying, 'If you give me this, I will give you that.'

A small story:

A clergyman once received a call on his mobile phone to attend immediately to a lady who was seriously ill.

He left for her house soon after the call but was puzzled as to why he was being called as the lady was not of his parish and she was more a visitor from the other church.

He rang the doorbell and entered the house.

While he was waiting to be shown into the room, he looked at the lady's child who was with him and asked, 'It feels very nice that you thought of me at this moment. Is your own minister out of town?'

The child promptly replied, 'Oh no! He is in town. We were just taking precaution in case the disease is contagious.'

We play our intelligent games all the time, even with God. We play it so safe and small because we don't know that if we let go, we will become infinitely intelligent, be embraced by Existence, which is infinite intelligence.

We have these ideas of what we want but we do not realize that these ideas have come from the limited intelligence we possess ourselves. We do not even know what we really need and keep yearning and begging for momentary pleasures. If we just go a bit deeper and realize that we are a part of a grand creation and in the safest hands of the Ultimate Intelligence, we will be utterly relaxed and be able to live to our complete potential and enjoy life to the fullest. We will be able to achieve anything we want but without the stress that arises from fear and greed.

This Intelligence responds to our prayers, to our every thought. Thoughts and desires are energy. Be very clear: Whatever you see as physical reality is created in the laboratory of your mind first. Only after its creation in the mind does it transform to physical reality. It is only because the universe responds to man's every thought, to every prayer, that man follows worship till date. But he forgets that the response is not through power but through intelligence. He doesn't understand that and there starts the problem of asking and asking.

The law of conservation of energy combined with Einstein's equation that proves the equivalence of matter and energy also reflect the same truth that there is nothing either created or destroyed in the universe; it is just a change of forms.



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The mystics say that we come from God. On the other hand, scientists believe that we come from monkeys. If evolution was that straight forward, all monkeys should by now have become humans and humans should have become something more. Evolution has stopped with humans because we are the only ones with consciousness. Our next step is to advance to universal consciousness.

A buffalo cannot become enlightened even if it lived for a thousand years. Humans have this unique capability of consciousness, and hence, every human has the potential to become enlightened and realize his true nature. Being alive is the only qualification needed to become enlightened. With this capability comes the inherent urge to know the true nature of oneself.

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Intelligence Why is this?

It is because man came from Existence and yearns to become one with it and it is perfectly possible because of his consciousness that can grow and become one with the universal consciousness.

Believing that the universe is just matter is what causes power struggles, terrorism and violence of all kinds. When we realize that the universe is Intelligent Energy, the seeds of peace are sown. The world is divided into those who are spiritual, who believe in its Intelligence and those who are material, who live for power and control over others.

You can see this on the scale of nations where politicians try to gain dominance and control over more and more number of people and possessions. You can see this on the scale of a family as well where the husband tries to domineer over his wife and derives pride from the thought of having someone in his power. In the office, you can see the boss exerting his influence through direct or indirect means over his subordinates.

Violence and terrorism stem from the desire to possess. And what can you possess? Only matter! Only matter can be possessed, is it not? That is why people who believe that everything is matter, people who are so unaware, who are so oblivious to the all-pervading energy, want to possess all the time. They want to possess people, places, things and even God. Be very clear: the moment you want to possess something, you reduce it to mere matter, whereas the truth is: everything is energy.

People want to possess God. That is the irony of the situation. They feel they have enough power



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to possess God! Such is the deep violence in the human mind today. This radical understanding of the violent nature of people should be understood very clearly. It is a basic truth. People play up under the guise of love for the country, love for religion and so on. It is all nonsense. They are violent because they think of the entire universe as matter and they can possess anything and everything. It has its roots in deep ignorance.

This is what leads to the 'kicking the dog' syndrome also:

The boss comes to work in a nasty mood after fighting with his wife while leaving his house.

The anger is directed at his subordinate who makes a small mistake in his work. The subordinate gets a lashing that he thinks he doesn't deserve for the mistake that he made. But, he cannot retort at his boss.

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So, he keeps his anger within himself and the moment he reaches home, he throws it on his wife who was probably a bit late in opening the door when he rang the door-bell.

The wife, who also doesn't want to fight with her husband, shouts at the kid who is doing his homework.

The kid again, not in a controlling position with his mother, throws out his vengeance on the pet dog and kicks it.

Finally, the dog takes revenge by biting someone at the door!

This is how the vicious circle of power and wanting to possess spills over into so many lives and spoils the peace in different places!

All of us, at one time or other have experienced the power of nature, the fury in earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions and watched helplessly as thousands perish. We then question nature's wisdom. The wisdom of nature is beyond our understanding in terms of material balance.

Let me explain:

Imagine that you run over a whole community of ants driving your SUV car. The ants may call it 'Hurricane SUV.' Now, can they ask us why it happened? No! Their logic is so different from ours. In the same way, God's will is so different from our will. Will you be able to say whether these things are free will or predestination? No logical answer is possible. If the ants ask us, we cannot answer. And these ants may even be asking an enlightened ant the same question! Their religious leaders may be teaching them ideas about how and why it happened. But the truth is that they are cheating those ants. In attempting to answer these questions, all organized religions prove that no logical answer is possible, that's all. We must understand that the level of will is totally different. This is how it is with 'our will' and 'God's will'. All we can



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do is to raise the frequency of our will to the level of Divine will, that's all.

While accepting the *shakti*, the power of nature, we find it difficult to understand the *buddhi*, the intelligence of nature.

The people who understand that the entire universe is pure energy are the peace-loving people. They know for sure that their logic cannot be applied and will not work for the universe. They know life is a flux determined by the ever-evolving intelligence of the universe. They know that they only have to behave in accordance with the orderly chaos.

If we trust Nature's order, Its energy, Its intelligence, and apply it to our benefit, we will find ourselves living in a world without turmoil, since each individual will accept himself as unique and on par with the next, with no conflict and in full confidence of partaking the limitless wealth of the universe.

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In his path-breaking book, 'Messages from Water', Masaru Emoto describes the amazing results of his experiments with ordinary water.

Emoto bottled ordinary tap water in various containers and labeled them differently as 'love', 'hate', 'greed', 'compassion', 'terror', 'Bible', 'Koran' and many other such attributes.

To each bottle of water, he spoke everyday for 10 minutes in line with its label.

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To the bottle of water labeled 'love', he spoke on love, with love

To the one labeled 'terror', he spoke on terror with an attitude of terror

He read the Koran to the bottle labeled likewise.

At the end of a month, he froze the water in these bottles separately and studied the frozen crystals of each under a microscope.

To his amazement, he found that the crystals of water labeled 'love' shone brilliantly like diamonds.

Those labeled 'terror' seemed misshapen, ghostly, and somehow fearful.

Most amazingly, the crystals from the bottle of water labeled 'Koran' had the imprint of the Holy Kaaba on them!

This is the power of words or thoughts on water. Water constitutes more than 80% of our body system. You can imagine the power of words, our own words and those of others, upon our body system that is made up mostly of fluids! In the way that water responds to our thoughts and words, in the same way the rest of the energy of the universe also does.

When we meditate, we invoke the cosmic energy; in fact, the only way for us to link with the cosmic energy is through meditation. The *Taitreya Upanishad*, an ancient Hindu scripture, said thousands of years ago:



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From the energy of the cosmos appeared the energy of the space.

From the energy of the space appeared the energy of air.

From the energy of air appeared the energy of fire.

From the energy of fire appeared the energy of water.

From the energy of water appeared the energy of earth.

From the energy of earth appeared the energy of health-giving herbs.

From the energy of the herbs appeared the energy of plants.

From the energy of plants appeared the energy of food.

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All energies except the energy of cosmos and space are tangible and can be accessed physically. The only way to access the energy of cosmos and space, of which we are a part, is to be one with them, to be aware that we are one with them. The way for this is meditation.

At the time India was occupied by the British, their soldiers used to travel between England

and India often. They found that when they carried water from England in their ships to India, the water got spoilt even while on ship. However, when they carried water back from India, the water not only stayed fresh through the voyage, but was still consumable when they reached England.

When scientists studied this surprising phenomenon, they found that this water had been taken from the sacred river Ganges in Calcutta in India and had properties of killing harmful bacteria and rejuvenating itself.

It is no wonder because millions of those who have prayed to the river Ganges over thousands of years have left their chants and prayer imprints that have made this water so energizing.

The river Nile has been studied by the Egyptians over thousands of years by measuring its flow, level, turbulence and other properties. They have found that these parameters of this great river have been found to reflect catastrophic incidents in distant parts of the world, such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis. This great river foretold events, if only we knew how to read them.

The universe responds to us; it responds to the state of our being; it responds to our awareness. The state of being should be responsible for our status and for the status to be sustained. Status without state of mind brings us only grief. If you



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wish to see atheists, all that you need to do is to go and see priests in the temples. They take God so much for granted that they treat God as a stone. They are invested with status without having acquired the necessary state.

The priests in the temples should be the most loving people ever but in reality it is quite different. They have become so commercial. Every moment they are with the idols, chanting the name of the Lord, bathing in holy waters, performing fire offerings, meditating and what not. But rarely does one see divinity in them. They claim God is everywhere but their body language shows no sign of it.

There are multiple ways and steps to becoming one with Existence. The energies in this world range from the grossest which is the Earth energy to the subtlest and most powerful which is the space energy. Initially, we worship the Earth energy in the form of idols that are installed in places of worship. It is much easier in the initial stages to relate to this gross energy because it is tangible and can be felt easily. Then, we move to other forms like water as in taking a holy dip in the waters of sacred rivers like the Ganges. Then we move to a higher and more abstract level as in worshipping fire through *yagna* (ritual fire sacrifice). One step further is realizing that Existence pervades the air and using *mantras* (holy chants) to attune oneself with Existence. Finally, we aim to become one with Existence

which pervades us as the space energy, through meditation

If only the priests really felt the truth behind these things and brought in awareness every moment, every action of theirs would take them closer to realization. But they completely miss the grand truth behind these rituals. They reduce them to mere activity. There is no spirit in it, no reverence in it. They can themselves experience the oneness with Existence as well as offer that experience to people through their profession. But this does not happen. They have moved away from the underlying truth.



And most of them enjoy a special status in the most revered temples of India and abroad; the temples are revered by virtue of the energy field present there due to the energies left behind by great enlightened Master of yester years.

I always tell people: The state is what you should aim for. The status will automatically follow the state; don't bother about the status. When you genuinely aspire for the state, you won't be bothered about the status anyway. That is the reason an enlightened person is so established in his state. He is not bothered about the status even though he is worshipped. Compassion for and responsibility of the entire world descends on the enlightened person. He becomes just a medium through which Existence works its miracles.

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I constantly get emails from all over the world from people who have not met me recently saying, 'Master, you came to me in my dream and removed my sufferings', 'You gave me *darshan* (appearance) in my dreams and healed me', 'You appeared in front of me and answered my questions.' Then, they ask me, 'Master, do you really know when you appear and give *darshan* to us?'

Now, let me tell you very clearly, honestly; I do not know. I have rented this body to the Divine, that's all. Because I disappeared, the Divine is using this form to guide you. The moment I claim that I gave *darshan*, the whole thing is over. The moment I declare it is I who appeared, it is over. Then, the Divine will stop using this form. As long as I am very clear this is not me, it is just Existence using this form, It will continue to use this flute to play her songs. I am just a hollow bamboo for *Parashakti* (Universal energy in the form of the Divine Mother) to play her music, that's all.

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We need to be very clear on how God or Existence flows through every being as much as he or she allows it to. The lesser the resistance, better the flow. And what is this resistance? Ego, that's all. That is why we say, an enlightened Master is Existence itself and is completely egoless.

God is like a dustbin for most of us. When something goes well, we take credit for it. When

something goes wrong, we blame God for it. God is great if He answers our prayers. Please remember, God is even greater when He does not make your prayers come true; because only He knows how dangerous your prayers are to you! Look at what man has done: He has piled up atomic weapons which can destroy Earth 100 times over. With such an attitude, you can imagine what kind of prayers he would be putting to God! What will happen if God fulfilled all those prayers?

Understand: Not only the prayers of those who made the atomic weapons, even our own prayers are dangerous in ways we don't know. We ask for name and fame. Imagine if name and fame came to us and we did not know how to handle it! It can be a dangerous thing for us. We will simply destroy ourselves. Imagine if we asked for more money and we spent all of it without frugality? We would be left with lesser money than earlier. So God knows what we are made up of and how much of what we can handle. He will give us that much only.

But we keep blaming God for not giving us all that we want, for everything we ask for. When we keep getting whatever we want, we end up with depression of success. Your status overcomes your state. Status without state of mind, power without wisdom, can kill a person. This is why God does not answer most of our prayers.



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A small Zen story:

Once, a disciple asked a Zen Master, 'What is the difference between your life before and after enlightenment?'

The Master replied, 'When I started, a mountain was a mountain and a river was a river; when I traveled, a mountain was not a mountain and a river was not a river; when I reached, a mountain was again a mountain and a river again a river.'

Before achieving enlightenment, you are ordinary. Halfway across your path to enlightenment, you already feel that you have reached and you feel extraordinary though you are still ordinary. When you have reached, you have shed your ego, you no longer care for status; you have attained the state and you feel ordinary even though you are extraordinary. This is the truth conveyed through this beautiful story.

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We, as a part of this Universe, are part of its potential and part of its chaos and order. When we try and be in control of us and others, when we try to be perfect, we violate this cosmic order.

Perfectionism is a disease; it leads to madness. Orderly people tend to inflate their ego and suffer through perfectionism.

We try to maintain order because we believe we have boundaries. Let go of your boundaries and your need for order will disappear; joy will appear. The problem is we are always taught

anything with the help of boundaries. We are taught we are Hindus and then and there we draw a boundary which demarcates Hindus from Christians, Muslims, Jains and what not. We are taught we are socialists; then and there we draw a boundary that demarcates us from communists, fascists and what not. We are taught we belong to upper middle class family and there we draw the boundary that demarcates us from the upper class, the middle class, the lower class and what not. We are brought up with boundaries, in every other aspect of upbringing.

Because of this, we perceive ourselves in such a limited fashion. We try and see the boundaries in everything around us, all the non-existent boundaries. It is like trying to pluck at non-existent lint. There is nothing there and you try to create something and discover it. While we are chaotic energies, like electrons that are traveling at super speed, all charged up, we perceive ourselves to be such limited beings.

When you realize the Cosmic Consciousness within yourself, you will discover the order that is inherent in you, without doing yourself harm. You will accept yourself as you are and others as they are.

When you experience the order in the cosmic chaos, you experience bliss; when you realize the chaos within you as order, you exude compassion; that compassion surely will lead you to enlightenment.



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The Miracle of Body Intelligence

A small story:

A man was alone in the house when the doorbell rang and a saleswoman stood selling dinner set.

She took out the knife set to show to him but accidentally cut her finger and it started bleeding profusely.

He gave her first aid and sent her away.

Some time later, another lady came in selling the same thing.

The man explained: 'Another lady was here a few minutes ago, trying to sell me these same things. In fact, that's her blood here at the doorstep'.

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The terrified lady turned and ran away!

You see, anything that even remotely suggests pain causes us so much discomfort that we would like to run away. However, pain is a basic necessity of our lives. Just imagine, were there to be no pain, we may start styling our faces and limbs as we do our hair everyday! We would twist and turn our noses and ears and hair to make them look the way we want them

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to be. Pain is a sign of our body wisdom and renders us as integrated humans.

How many times do we think that by torturing the body, we can make ourselves better? Look at yourself when you are working out in the gym. You have this idea that only when you tire yourself out to the maximum and your muscles are crying out will you be able to build your body. There is nothing wrong with building a fit body but when that leads you to ignoring the signs of exhaustion and pain in the body, you are damaging it. Look at yourself in the gym and see how many times you are pushing how fast you can run on the treadmill based on how fast the person next to you is running.

I tell you, do not put limits and goals on yourself based on comparison with others; rely on your body wisdom and immense innate potential. Then, you will not just reach but you will breach the artificial limits that you have put on yourself. There are also people who torture the body as part of spiritual practices. In most cases, this only leads to insensitivity.

From a young age, we are taught that we are heroes if we ignore our bodies, if we push it beyond its limits. We are taught to tell our bodies to shut up if they complain. When you are in pain, you think that it will be less intense or go away if you ignore it.

I tell you, if you have pain in a part of the body, focus on that part. Giving attention is like giving



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energy. Attention is energy. When you focus on that part of the body, you give energy to that part which is exactly what it needs because the part is lacking energy.

In fact, we invite pain upon ourselves through lack of moderation in whatever we do. We actually often enjoy the pain as it brings us attention. It is established that humans can stay alive without food for 90 days but develop serious mental trauma if we are paid no attention for 14 days.

To sustain ourselves, we create a low energy pool of ailments and gladly suffer cold and cancer. Pain and *dis-ease* are often substitutes for lack of attention. They are signs that we are desperately seeking, begging and demanding attention.

A small story:

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A man used to complain bitterly about the lunch he brought to work every day.

He would open his lunch box and look at its contents with no joy and crib.

His friends would offer him part of their food and often he would refuse, and appear to suffer as he ate his own lunch.

His friends, one day, finally asked him why he didn't ask his wife to cook something he liked to eat, rather than suffering this way.

He exclaimed, 'What wife! I am not married. I cook my own lunch.'

Just like this man who made his own food and whined about his own creation, we too live our lives much the same way. Through lack of awareness, we invite pain upon ourselves, complain about it and resort to painkillers. We do not mind being afflicted by the same ailment again and again, since we do not identify *ourselves* as the cause of the problem. Responsibility for the pain is always some else's, never our own.

Pain is caused by absence of attention. Therefore it stands to reason that pain can be relieved by attention. Pain is a negative energy; it does not exist by itself; it is the absence of a positive energy. In the same way as darkness has a negative presence meaning it is just the absence of light and the presence of light removes darkness, pain is the absence of awareness and awareness eliminates pain.

When you hurt yourself, energy actually gushes to the bruised part to heal it. The rushing of this energy we feel as pain. But when we feel the pain, we start resisting it and then the energy flow to the part stops and healing also slows down. Instead, if we could focus on the pain with awareness and feel the healing happening with all that pain, feel it intensely, you will find that the pain becomes concentrated, shrinks in area and finally



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becomes a pin point and then disappears! You will find that if you do this, there will be no pain as you perceived it earlier and the part has healed as well.

The next time you have some pain in any part of the body, try this:

Lie in a dark room with eyes closed and focus upon the point of pain to the exclusion of all else. As you experience the point of pain, drop the notion of 'pain' from your mind. Focus all your attention at this spot and soon you will find it shrinking. Concentrate further and you find that the pain has disappeared and in its place you experience pleasure; pain and pleasure are the same sensation with different tags. Your awareness of pain has caused it to disappear and bring in a positive energy of pleasure. Just try this.

I tell this from my own experience:

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Once, after I got out of a car, the driver closed the door accidentally on my finger.

My crewmembers started panicking.

I told them to keep quiet.

There was intense pain but no suffering from it. I could distinctly see the finger swelling.

I could distinctly feel the energy welling up in the navel center and flowing towards the finger to fill up the lack of energy.

I could see healing happening.

It became alright in just a few minutes.

The devotees were shocked. I told them that this is what I preach and this is the truth so there is nothing to be surprised about! I showed it practically to them at a time when they were not ready for it! Usually only in the meditation hall these things are experienced when one is ready for it. Here they saw it happening in a very practical situation.

Descartes said, 'I think; therefore, I am.' Vedanta says, 'When you stop thinking, you are.' Descartes could not reconcile the mind-body connection.

There is no mind and no body; it is mind-body; it is one. Scientists now know that intelligence resides at the cellular level; not just in our brains. Every single cell of our body is gifted with intelligence to carry out its own functions and to coordinate the functions of related cells. DNA, the carrier of our genetic code, is embedded with our memories and emotions, imprinting not merely physical but mental, emotional and psychic characteristics as well. As our DNA is, so is our perception of the world!

We are not even integrated within ourselves. We mostly live the upper part of our body. When you try to recall someone's name, you always try to put the name to the person's face, never



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to the lower limbs of the person. Even when you try to visualize your own self, you will be able to visualize only up to the chest probably; just try it. Only the upper portion will come to your mind.

When such separation is created, the energy flows only to parts that get attention. Our face and arms feel more alive and sensitive than our feet. Just feel the skin on your face. The moment you touch it, you will feel the touch. You will be able to feel the entire pressure that you apply on it. But if you touch your feet, you will find that you need to press much harder to create any sensitivity in the skin. You have to apply a lot more pressure to even feel the touch. This is because our lower parts have become much less sensitive due to lack of our attention, our energy on them.

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Do you ever look at someone's hands or feet and remember the person based on that identification? No! You need to see their face and then your face lights up in recognition.

So coming back to the subject of pain, a small story:

Two men were walking on an unknown forest path.

A sudden flash of lightning startled them.

One of them was frightened and confused and started looking for a shelter to protect himself.

The other wiser one, stayed calm and used the light that the lightning provided to observe what lay ahead, and moved on ahead in the path.

Pain is like that lightning. We have no control over when, how and why it happens. All we can do is to choose whether to suffer from it or learn from it. If we use the opportunity of that pain experience to look inside us, we discover we are the cause and that only we can be the solution for it.

When you observe pain deeply, you realize that you are not the body. No pain can affect the real You. When you overcome pain, you experience the rare freedom arising out of non-attachment. You then exist as an *Atman*, as an enlightened Master. Pain can be the gateway to bliss, your key to enlightenment.

As the great Master, Ashtavakra said, 'An object of enjoyment that comes of itself is neither painful nor pleasurable for someone who has eliminated attachment and who is free from dualism and from desire. Righteousness and unrighteousness, pleasure and pain, are purely of the mind and are no concern of yours. You are neither the doer nor the reaper of the consequences, so you are always free.'

What I said about physical pain applies equally to emotional pain as well. We need to watch emotional pains too. When we feel hurt and angry through other people's actions, we need to



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accept these emotions without judgment of who is right or wrong. Suppressing these emotions can cause lasting harm. When you feel hurt or angry, just watch these emotions; don't feel sorry for yourself; do not direct the anger against another person. With some time, within some days, you will see a transformation of that emotion. You will see your own transformation. All emotions are energy; how long can it last without being fed by additional negative emotions?

When we accept hurt, anger and pain with understanding and awareness, compassion results. True compassion transforms anger, pain and hurt into love and bliss.

We speak of allowing freedom to those we love. Love is unconditional freedom; to talk of giving freedom in love makes no sense; you are holding back. Love can be a door to freedom and joy or to living hell. If you love someone, let that person free. If the person is yours, he or she will come back. Otherwise that person was never yours anyway.

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If you truly love someone, anyone, respond with unconditional love to whatever the other person's emotion is, with no expectation of the return of such love. Initially this may seem difficult, even artificial. Once you try this approach a few times and see the effect upon your relationships, you will never wish to do it any other way. People will see the difference in you and respond in kind, with no expectation from you.

To live life without pain and suffering, become aware of that emotion. Then accept the present, the here and now. Awareness with acceptance is the way out of pain and suffering. Suffering is important in life for growth. When you understand suffering though, you will realize how unnecessary it is for you to suffer! This is what is called acceptance. Acceptance is not any passive submission, not any suppression. It is that which happens out of awareness, on its own. It flowers on its own; you don't have to make an effort to accept. When you make an effort, it is submission; when it happens on its own, it is acceptance. People often mistake acceptance to be an effort to compromise or an effort to suppress the true feelings. No. It is that which happens out of deep awareness.

When you transcend both pain and pleasure, which are both one and the same, you experience Bliss, which is perfect harmony, inner silence and total peace.

Emotionally and mentally, pain arises out of our resistance to the present. Such pain is addictive and creates a negative energy field around us that we can refer to as the Pain Body. Emotional imbalance disturbs the physical body; sexual repression leads to back pain; the sense of bearing high responsibilities causes shoulder pain. When you are in unfriendly company, your body seems to shrink. When we resist through all these methods, pain arises and manifests itself in all these parts. Pain calls for our attention because attention is energy.



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Let me tell you something that actually happened:

A young man was brought to me by his parents. He had suddenly lost his eyesight.

His parents were desperate to somehow revive his eyesight.

They said that the doctors could find nothing wrong with his visionary apparatus.

I requested to talk to the boy in private.

When I spoke to him in private, he confided that his parents had forbidden him to see the girl he loved.

His mind had then decided that when he could not see the girl he most wanted to see, his eyes would rather not see anything and he had actually lost his eyesight because of this.

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I made him meditate upon a photograph of the girl for a few days and he regained his sight.

It is the mind that causes a lot of seemingly unconnected physical effects. The *Bhagavata Purana*, which recounts the various incarnations of Lord Vishnu, the Sustainer in the Hindu trinity, especially His incarnation as Lord Krishna, says this about Krishna and Radha:

Radha was born at about the same time as Krishna. Radha would not open her eyes till she was brought before Krishna. When asked about

this in later years, she said, 'What else was there for me to see in this world? I was born for Krishna, and He was all who mattered to me. I waited till I came to Him to open my eyes so that I could see Him.' Radha's attention was only upon Krishna even from her birth; nothing else mattered.

Our senses carry deep intelligence. When our actions are contrary to what the senses deeply desire, they stop functioning. We feel so insensitive about what our body feels; we are so ignorant about the intelligence of our body that we end up ignoring it and damaging it.

Most of us hate our bodies. I conducted a meditation program wherein I asked people to write down how they would like to be at the end of the program. The papers came back to me. There were varied notes about how they would like to be, running through physical, mental, spiritual and economic levels. But 99% of the notes had one point in them and that was that they wanted to be more beautiful. A few of them instead of saying this had said that they wanted to be more comfortable with their own body. Both really mean the same: that they did not like their present body. The second set of people were more aware; they wrote that they only wanted enough intelligence to be more comfortable with their bodies.

Our body is such a beautiful mechanism. We can take care of it so lovingly. It is because of



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this body that you are here today listening to me! The body is your vehicle. It is a temple. It has to be taken care of like a temple that houses the Divine which is really your being. You should take care of it like a flower.

Just look at how many times you gulp down spicy food even though your eyes may be watering and your tongue burning. Just to satisfy your sense of taste, you ignore the pleas of your body and then, when it is not able to handle it and leads to acidity or something else, you complain. Be sensitive to what the body tells you; there is tremendous intelligence already residing in it.

A popular sports gear advertisement reads, 'If your body tells you to stop, tell your body to shut up.' We are advised to ignore our body; to tell it to get lost.

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Most of the time, we tell our body to shut up instead of listening to it as we ought to. No other living creature needs an alarm clock to wake up or a sleeping pill to go to bed. We, in fact, pride ourselves on using an alarm clock and sleeping pills. We talk about how much we can drink, how late we can party, how hard we can work and how badly we can treat ourselves and our body. No wonder we need more food to stop feeling hungry, more drugs to overcome illness, more wine to get drunk and more television to stop feeling bored.

Our body has tremendous intelligence built into it. A vast majority of our body activity is

controlled by the autonomous nervous system that takes care of us in spite of us. Do we ever give inputs consciously to our body pertaining to breathing, digestion, maintaining our balance or even regulating our sleep-wake cycle? No! If we needed to worry about doing these things, we would be a bag of knots, not with two hands and two feet and a straight spine. Our body survives in spite of us, not because of us.

This is the miracle of body intelligence.

Our mind and body interact very closely and influence each other in amazing ways. Over 85% of our physical ailments are influenced by the mind and are psychosomatic. The mind has the power to both cause and cure diseases.

In a path-breaking experiment in Japan on allergies, patients were tested with allergy-causing plants, by placing leaves on them while blind folded. It was found that patients reacted even when plants to which they had no allergies were placed on their skin and were told that these were the allergy causing substances. What was even more amazing was, when the allergy causing plant leaves were placed on their skin and they were given the name of a plant that did not cause allergy, they had no allergic reaction! Similarly, in multiple personality tests, it was found that the same person reacted differently to allergic substances depending on the state the person was in.



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PET scanners show that memories evoke different chemical patterns in the brain. Instantly, this information is spread through the body to the cellular structure. We then react to these memories. That is why we say, our body is truly a reflection of our thoughts!

The human body consists of trillions of cells living in total harmony. If you look at the individual cell itself though, it has intelligence by itself and can survive if isolated and even if the nucleus is removed. When it is a part of the larger whole, the body, it is not the intelligence of the individual cell at work but a central intelligence that governs and this ensures that this remarkable system of your human body can work smoothly. The studies by Dr. Bruce Lipton, a Stanford biologist, have gone into much detail to prove this.

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Take the example of Lance Armstrong, the famous biker who has become the epitome of courage and grit. Lance was a very successful professional biker who was ranked the number one biker in the world. He won a number of prestigious tournaments and was at the top of his career when he was literally forced off his bike by an excruciating pain. To his horror, he was diagnosed with cancer that had spread all over his body. But his courage and determination and the power of his mind, gave him tremendous potential to not just get back to normal but also the strength to get back to his passion for biking. He totally recovered from the

deadly disease. He trained hard enough and returned to not just participate but to win the most strenuous cycling championships, Tour de France, 6 times! What to most people would have come as a lethal blow, killing the spirit and eventually the body, became a turning point for this man who has now become a great source of inspiration and hope for thousands of people.

When you stress yourself out with too much of work or lack of enough rest, be aware that you are damaging your mind and body. Research has shown that under constant stress, the neurons in the pre-frontal cortex, which is the region of the brain responsible for emotions and decision-making, shrivel up and die.

Whenever we face any perceived threat, either internal as in an infection or external, the mind-body goes into a defensive mode. This causes blood to be diverted from growth areas of the body such as the intestines, heart, lung etc. to exterior limbs such as legs and arms, so that we are better prepared for either flight or fight to save ourselves.

If such adrenalin rushes happen frequently, without adequate release potential, serious stress to the mind-body results. Repeated fear strokes of imagining ghosts or spirits every time one sees a shadowy movement in the dark can reduce one to a nervous wreck. Such is the power of the mind over body.



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Threat of fear is more dangerous than fear itself. We can cope with fear by facing the fear. In the case of threat of fear, we need understanding. Terrorists take advantage of this human weakness. All they have to do is to keep one under the threat of fear without having to actually commit any act of terror. That by itself can reduce even the strongest person to a fearful one.

Understanding why our strengths can be depleted through fear and greed and other negative emotions can help us use our energy sources better.

We have immense energy, the entire cosmic energy at our disposal; we only need to know how to tap it.

Let me narrate to you a real incident that happened in my life:

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I was in North India as a young boy amongst a group of spiritual aspirants.

The place we were in had a number of tigers that used to be on the prowl after nightfall.

It was the practice to ring a huge bell if anybody sensed danger so as to alert the others.

One day, the bell rang and all of us hurried to the nearest shelter possible.

The next morning, when we assembled, we realized that one of us was missing.

Fearing the worst, we started searching and calling out for him.

We heard a feeble voice coming from one of the makeshift shelters.

We hurried to it and asked the person to come out.

He replied, 'I cannot. There is a huge stone blocking the door and I cannot move it.'

A few of us young boys managed to go into the shelter through the window.

We saw a huge stone next to the door and it took all of us collectively to move it away.

After we came out, we asked the man how the stone reached there in the first place.

He replied, 'Last night, on hearing the bell sounding the alarm, I was terrified and ran towards this shelter. On the way, I saw this huge stone. I just lifted it and put it behind the door to ensure the tiger can in no way open it.'

All of us were amazed as to how one person could have lifted this huge stone himself and now, when the threat was gone, how he could no longer muster the same energy and it took three or four of us to move the stone, leave alone lift it!

You see, under tremendous fear, the energy in us just opens out and becomes available to do



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things. This hidden energy is not available to us during non-emergency times because then our mind is not geared up for that kind of activity. However, during times of emergency, the energy simply opens out beyond the control of our mind. Even if you feel fatigued, the energy gush happens and makes things work.

Our body has access to multiple levels of energy including this layer that opens up when we are faced with fear, with the instinct to survive. A woman who would normally be terrified when she sees a vehicle speeding towards her, will suddenly find the energy to rush into the road when she sees her child's life in danger of the oncoming vehicle.

Realize that our body and mind have much more potential than we typically use them for. At the same time, they need to be respected for their potential and not abused by comparing our abilities with others and wanting to be like others. All of us have been given all that we need. However, we do not have all that we want because our wants are based on just what we see around us and want to have.

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Both our mind and body are expressions of the same consciousness. The mind and body are rooted in consciousness. They cannot and do not function separately. Unless we respect both equally, we can never be integrated individuals. Contrary to what some may believe, I say that the way to spirituality is only through the body.

Make peace with your body. Become aware of your body. You can then sense what the body needs, even before you become consciously aware of the need. Drop the idea of controlling your body. Do not tie yourself up in knots causing yourself pain when your body cries out to you to stop torturing it. Trust in your body wisdom. Only by deeply understanding your body with clarity and compassion, will you be able to find a way to go beyond it.

Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita said: This body, O son of Kunti, is called the field, and one who knows this body is called the knower of the field.



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Who am I – the Ultimate Question

There are many kinds of questions we ask in our lives. The first kind is out of innocence – we don't know the answer and we ask because we want to know. The second kind is out of knowledge. Here we know the answer but we ask to see if the other person is saying the same thing; we simply look for a concurrence. The third kind is out of ignorance. We don't even know if we want to know the answer, but we ask. This kind of question arises out of some deep dissatisfaction.

The question of the first kind is what a child would ask. The second kind is asked just to express your knowledge. The third kind simply expresses the deep confusion within.

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People come to me and ask, 'Master, tell us about God. How do we get enlightened?' I simply talk to them about various things, about their family, etc. After an hour of conversation, they will not ask the question on God again. Be very clear: This only means that the question was just a casual one, not a deep one and not our own at that. Hence it simply disappears.

'Who am I?' is the ultimate question. Why? Because the moment you ask this, all other questions disappear and the questioning mind

itself dissolves! Mind survives with the help of questions. As long as it survives, questions will arise. Questions themselves get provoked by progressive answers. The answers instead of quenching the questions, give rise to more of them.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna asks Krishna, 'What is *Brahman*? What is the science behind *Jeevan Muktha, Adyatman* etc.? What is it that makes the *Jeevan Muktha* react, age and respond to life?' Krishna tells him, 'If I ask you to repeat the question you have just asked, you will not be able to. It is not your own question. You have asked simply for the sake of asking.'

Most often, we just express our deep confusion in asking these kinds of questions. We keep asking, 'Why is this?' but forget to ask, 'Who am I?' Until you know that none of your questions is going to help and until you realize the source from which these questions arise, the questions will not stop. It is like this: If the source of the fountain is poisoned, the fountain will also be poisoned. If the source is pure, the fountain will also be pure. Unless you solve the source of the questions, the questions themselves will not be solved.

The smallest and greatest book that I have read is Ramana Maharishi's book titled 'Who am I?' The very question is beautiful. It puts a full stop to all other questions! It transforms all your questions to a quest and your urge to urgency.

There are two kinds of questions. The first kind leads you to answers and the second kind leads



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you to experience. The first kind gives you more philosophies, more words and more confusion. The second kind dissolves all the questions and leads you to the ultimate Truth or Bliss in life.

If you are asked who you are, you will reply that you are the father of someone, or the mother of someone, or the wife of someone or the husband of someone. But, who are you to yourself? Sit alone in a room and ask 'Who am I?' You will then probably say that you are God or *Atman* or a spiritual being. But what is 'me'? Either you think that you are the body or you think that you are the soul. If you think based on your instinct, you say that you are the body; if you think based on your intellect, you think that you are the soul.

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Actually, if you start contemplating deeply about the question 'Who am I?' you will slowly lose your very base, the base which you have built over many years with all the conditioning. Your whole life is built on pseudo-identities, pseudo-personalities. You continuously associate yourself with relationships like father, son etc. You play between different personalities. You simply cannot exist without social identities. Even spiritual practices and religion are taken up to boost your social identity. In front of your boss, you are very submissive and obedient. The next minute, when you turn to your subordinate, your whole body language changes. You simply switch identities!

know the secret of your birth; why you were born. You have no idea or clarity about it. Death is also unknown. With birth and death unknown, just the travel of life happens. Why is this? Because you live with pseudo-identities and you never question your real identity by asking, 'who am I?'

You simply move on from one unknown to another, from one thought to another. If anyone asked Ramana Maharishi a question, he would simply ask them in return, 'Who is the questioner asking this question?' That's all, the question will disappear! We know about others but do not know about ourselves, our own being.

We think we need to get a new car, and therefore work hard and buy a car. Barely a few days and the excitement of having gotten the car dies. What seems like a mountain before achieving becomes nothing after achieving it. People, relationships, career etc, seem indispensable before we achieve them, but after we achieve them, there is no excitement.

This is because, before achieving anything, you are one personality and after achieving it, you are a different one – your identity has changed! Your mental set-up keeps changing. Till you know *who you are*, the question 'what you want' will never be answered. And till the question 'what you want' is answered, you will never feel peace irrespective of what you achieve. You will achieve outer worldly comforts but no inner satisfaction. First you need to know



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'I' and then only 'What I want'. The greatest thing about a rat race is that even if you win, you are only a rat!

Albert Einstein discovered the theory of relativity through his formula $E=mc^2$. Through this he delivered one of the great truths of the last century. He is said to have told people, 'The greatest truth has been given by me but my whole life has become a lie.'

When you don't know what you want or don't have the courage to go beyond what you want, you will only achieve and feel a deep sense of depression called 'depression of success'. There are two kinds of depressions; they are 'depression of failure' and 'depression of success'.

Depression of failure is alright because it gives you hope to stand up again and achieve success. Depression of success is not alright because you have achieved all that you want – name, fame, relationships and you now feel that what you achieved all this for, you have not achieved! You achieve the means but miss the goal that is the Bliss of life.

This shows that the entire life has been lived on a wrong philosophy, on castles in the air. People ask me, 'Master, if we meditate or ask the question, 'who am I', will our dreams come true?' I tell them, 'Meditating or asking 'who am I' will not make your dreams a reality but will make you understand that reality *is* your dream!'

To realize the first – that is realizing dreams as a reality, you need just *Shakthi*, Energy or power. To realize the second - that is realizing reality *is* your dream, you need *Buddhi* or intelligence. Meditation can give you deep intelligence to help you lead your life.

In life, we need to learn only the basic things. The question 'Who am I' will teach us these basic things – what we really need to know. This question is more than enough to start, move and end your life; to create, sustain and transform your life, to show you the path. Vivekananda says, 'Until you inner intelligence is awakened, no book is going to help you. Once your intelligence is awakened, no book is necessary!' Books are there to awaken your inner intelligence, your Master inside, your energy. Ramana's booklet, 'Who am I' is a bookless book that can awaken your inner intelligence.

When you start asking 'Who am I?' you will start feeling that you are not the body. If you are able to stand away from your body and see it, you will realize that you are not the person being observed, but the person observing or seeing. Next, if you witness your thoughts, you can experience your mind objectively. You will be able to see it in a state of depression or joy. You will realize that you are not your mind since you are able to experience it objectively. Objective experience of emotion, body or intellect shows that you are not any of them.



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If you search deeply, the answer to this question is nothing but the pure awareness of what you call *Atman* or *Brahman* or *Shiva* or *Vishnu*. *Shiva* is nothing but auspiciousness and *Vishnu* is nothing but that which fills the whole world. Here, your questions end and your being begins. Ramana says, 'until the question dies, ask it. There will be a space where there is neither the question nor the answer.'

Let me tell you a small story from my own life.

As a young boy, I once overheard a *Yogi* saying to his disciples that he was only an *Atman* (Spirit) and had no body.

I rushed back home curious to explore what I had just heard.

I grabbed a blade and slit my right thigh to see if I experienced pain.

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Only excruciating pain and chiding followed.

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I went back to the *Yogi* demanding an explanation.

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At that time, his explanation was beyond the scope of my understanding.

The incident however further strengthened my resolve in my spiritual quest.

To experiment with what you hear is perfectly alright even if you have understood it wrongly. But you must experiment. The *Yogi* told me to

sit and observe where my thoughts were coming from. I played with this technique as a 10-year old boy. This was the technique that gave me my first glimpse of God!

On one *Buddha Purnima* day when I was 12, I sat and tried tracing the roots of my thoughts or in other words tracing 'who am I'. Suddenly, something ruptured in my being and I became aware of the higher consciousness.

We need to understand that we are not the experiencer or the experienced, but simply the experience. We will feel that we are the experiencer if we try to explain based on intellect. We will feel that we are the experienced if we approach from our instinct. But we need to understand that we are simply the 'experience'.

Your being is nothing but the Experience! 'Who am I' is a basic question which can lead you to experience. It will start as a question and dissolve all other questions.

Someone asked me, 'Master, what *IS* real!'

What *Is*, is real, not what you see. There is nothing to be done with the 'IS'. There is something to be done with the person who sees it. When you feel at ease with 'what IS', you will see reality. When you are dis-eased with 'what IS', you will be diseased. If you start seeing without prejudice or judgment, you will see reality!



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Appendix



About Paramahansa Nithyananda

Paramahansa Nithyananda is an enlightened master living amidst us today. With a worldwide movement for meditation and inner bliss, Nithyananda offers solutions for situations as practical as every day stress to the quest for something as profound as enlightenment.

Nithyananda left home at a young age and traveled the length and breadth of India, visiting holy shrines, associating with several yogis and mystics during this period. He realized his intrinsic knowledge through the paths of meditation, yoga, knowledge, devotion, Tantra and other Eastern metaphysical sciences. With an enlightened insight into the core of human nature, Nithyananda has defined his mission for humanity at large.

Rooted in the ancient tradition of enlightened living, and embracing all world religions as sacred and unique. Nithyananda draws people from around the globe, crossing all societal, cultural, language, age and gender barriers.

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About Paramahansa Nithyananda

Since its inception, Nithyananda Dhyanapeetam in Bengaluru, India has been a spiritual center for devotees from all over the world. The organization renders innumerable services and programs. The worldwide ashrams and centers offer programs in Quantum Spirituality, where material and spiritual worlds merge to create blissful living.

The services provided by the organization include meditation ■ yoga ■ corporate leadership programs ■ free energy healing through the Nithya Spiritual Healing system ■ free education to youth ■ promoting art and culture ■ satsangs (spiritual gatherings) ■ free medical camps and eye surgeries ■

free meals at all ashrams worldwide ■ a holistic system of education for children through the ashram gurukul ■ a two-year free residential spiritual training program in India called Life Bliss Technology ■ a three-month residential program for international youth called Life Bliss Engineering, and more. Life Bliss Foundation is the USA-based entity that spreads the powerful teachings and meditations cognized by Nithyananda to centers in North America, Europe and other parts of the world.

Nithyananda says, 'Enlightenment flowers when individual consciousness disappears into Universal Consciousness. When you start living enlightenment, you automatically raise the human consciousness around you. Living enlightenment holds the key to global peace and inner bliss. Every individual should be a pioneer in the transition of human consciousness to Divine Consciousness.'

Programs and workshops

Nithyananda Mission offers specialized meditation programs worldwide, to benefit millions of people at the levels of body, mind and spirit. A few of them are listed below:

Inner Awakening

Inner Awakening is a 'master' program that is intensely transformative. It is a 21-day energy cycle that brings about an irreversible alchemy of moving from the mundane to the Divine. It is a program where the master is completely available to work on the true seeker and guide him to the Ultimate. Further, it gives you the lifetime opportunity to stay in the intense energy field of the Bengaluru ashram for 21 days.

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workshops*

Nithyananda says,

'The Inner Awakening program is designed to reproduce all the components of jeevan mukti or 'Living Enlightenment' in every being.

Each of my programs is designed to reproduce one component, one dimension of me in you. For example, Life Bliss Program Level 1 (LBP 1), is designed to reproduce one component that is 'living joyfully'. Life Bliss Program Level 2 (NSP) is designed to reproduce another dimension that is 'living death beautifully'. Nithya Yoga is designed to reproduce yet another component that is 'having a yogic body'. Each program is designed to reproduce one component of jeevan mukti in you.

Whenever you experience one dimension, you experience an opening, an inspiration or feeling to go deep. Unfortunately that one opening is not enough to pass into jeevan mukti and start staying in jeevan mukti itself. It is more like having one glimpse of jeevan mukti.

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Programs and workshops

The Inner Awakening is designed in a complete, whole way - it is like all the programs such as Nithyanandam, Nithya Yoga, everything put together and something more...reproducing all the components of jeevan mukti which is in me, in you.

The whole thing is now available to you in one place.

Living every moment with the understanding that life is introducing new dimensions of the cosmos to you is 'Living Enlightenment'."

Life Bliss Engineering

A residential program to experience the intense and transformative power of being in an enlightened master's presence. Life Bliss Engineering (LBE) is a 90-day program in the Bengaluru ashram in India, which takes you to the depths of your being through yoga, meditation, and helps you to awaken your innate peak potential. Learn directly from the master, Paramahansa Nithyananda, to engineer your very body and mind for enlightened living.



In LBE, you will:

- Experience life in its most authentic form of 'Living Enlightenment'.
- Learn and imbibe the ancient inner world science of an awakened consciousness through direct talks and meditations delivered by Nithyananda himself.
- Create a yogic body through daily practices of Nithya Yoga, the yoga for enlightenment designed by Nithyananda from Sage Patanjali's ancient system of yoga. Nithya Yoga unites mind, body and being for greater energy, mental clarity, physical and emotional well-being.
- Participate in the 'Inner Awakening' sessions, a 21-day enlightenment-intensive program with the master, that leads you to discover the very purpose of your life and rise above the clutches of your mind. This program includes life solutions and meditations for all levels of seekers, daily Nithya Yoga sessions, initiation into Nithya Spiritual Healing - an energy-based healing science and more.

APPENDIX

*Life Bliss
Engineering*

■ Embark on travel studies to culturally, historically and spiritually significant locations including Tiruvannamalai, the birthplace of Nithyananda, and Chidambaram, that help expand your capacity for creativity and intelligence, and to serve society with responsibility.

■ Experience continuous inner healing in the energy field surrounding the mystical Banyan Tree at the ashram in Bengaluru.

■ Enjoy ayurvedic satvic food during all meals in a day.

People from all over the world participate in this unique program and experience a quantum jump in their inner space and outer life.

Kalpataru

A one-day meditation program that sows in you the seed of Living Enlightenment. Through Kalpataru you will be blessed with:

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Shakti, the Energy to understand and change whatever you need to change in life,

Kalpataru *Buddhi*, the Intelligence to understand and accept whatever you don't need to change in life,

Yukti, the Clarity to understand and realize that however much you change, whatever you see as reality is itself a continuously changing dream,

Bhakti, the Devotion, the feeling of deep connection to That which is unchanging, eternal and Ultimate, and

Mukti, the Ultimate Liberation called Living Enlightenment when all these four are integrated in you.

This program empowers you with the energy to align your actions with your intentions so you move with success and inner bliss.

Life Bliss Program Level 1 (LBP Level 1)

- Energize yourself

A chakra based meditation program that relaxes and energizes the seven major chakras or subtle energy centers in your system. It gives clear intellectual and experiential understanding of your various emotions such as greed, fear, worry, attention-need, stress, jealousy, ego, and discontentment. It is designed to create a spiritual effect at the physical level. It is a guaranteed life solution to experience the reality of your own bliss. When you are liberated from a particular emotion, you experience a new world, a new energy. It is a highly effective workshop, experienced by millions of people around the globe.

Life Bliss Program Level 2 (LBP Level 2)

- Death demystified!

A meditation program that unleashes the art of living by demystifying the process of dying. This program creates the space to detach from ingrained and unconscious emotions like guilt, pleasure and pain, all of which stem from the ultimate fear of death. It is a gateway to a new life that is driven by natural intelligence and spontaneous enthusiasm.



APPENDIX

*Life Bliss
Program
Level*

**Life Bliss Program Level 3 - Atma Spurana
Program (LBP Level 3 - ATSP)**
- Connect with your Self!

An indepth program that analyzes clearly the workings of the mind and shows you experientially how to be the master of the mind rather than be dictated by it. It imparts tremendous intellectual understanding coupled with powerful meditations to produce instant clarity and integration.

**Life Bliss Program Level 3 - Bhakti Spurana
Program (LBP Level 3 - BSP)**
- Integrate your Devotion

A program that reveals the different dimensions of relating with others and with your deeper self. It clearly defines relationship as that which kindles and reveals your own unknown dimensions to you. It allows you to experience the real depth and joy of any relationship in your life.

Life Bliss Technology (LBT)
- Residential life sciences programs

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Life Bliss Technology (LBT) is a residential program for youth all around the world. Offered over either a three-month and a two-year period, this program, with its roots in the ancient inner science of living enlightenment, is designed to empower modern youth with good physical, mental and emotional health, practical life skills and above all, the science of blissful living. By nurturing creative intelligence and spontaneity, and



imparting life skills, it creates economically self-sufficient and spiritually strong youth. Above all, it offers a lifetime opportunity to live and learn under the tutelage of an enlightened master.

Nithyanandam

An advanced meditation program for seekers where the presence of the master and the intense energy field lead one to the state of nithya ananda - eternal bliss. It offers a range of techniques from meditation to service to sitting in the powerful presence of the master.

Nithya Spiritual Healing

Nithyananda offers Nithya Spiritual Healing, a science and service of energy based healing that is causing miraculous relief from a host of physical and mental diseases. Nithyananda initiates people into becoming healers of this Nithya Spiritual Healing system. The initiated healers world over touch at least 20,000 people every day through this free service.

Nithyananda Mission Highlights

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■ **Meditation and de-addiction camps worldwide:** Over 2 million people impacted to date

■ **Nithya Spiritual Healing:** A system of cosmic energy healing administered free through 5000 ordained healers, through our worldwide ashrams and centers, touching 20,000 people globally every day - healing both mind and body



■ **Anna Daan:** free food program: 10,000 nutritious meals distributed every week through all the ashram anna mandirs for visitors, devotees and disciples thus improving health standards

■ **The Nithyananda Order and its training:** Spiritual aspirants ordained as Sannyasis, Brahmacharis and Brahmacharinis: who undergo years of intensive training in yoga, meditation, deep spiritual practice, Sanskrit, vedic chanting, life skills, and who run the 100% volunteer based ashrams of Nithyananda Mission worldwide, working in all Mission activities

■ **Nithya Yoga:** A revolutionary system of yoga in the lines of sage Patanjali's original teachings, taught worldwide.

■ **Nithyananda Vedic Temples and Ashrams:** Over 30 Vedic temples and ashrams worldwide.

■ **Meditation Programs in prisons:** Conducted in prisons and juvenile camps to reform extremist attitudes - resulting in amazing transformation among the inmates.

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■ **Medical Camps:** Free treatment and therapies in allopathy, homeopathy, ayurveda, acupuncture, eye check-ups, eye surgeries, artificial limb donation camps, gynecology and more

■ **Support to children in rural areas:** School buildings, school uniforms and educational materials provided free to rural schools.

■ **Life Bliss Technology and Life Bliss Engineering Courses:** Two year / three month programs for youth to learn Life Engineering and the Science of Enlightenment.

■ **Nithyananda Gurukul:** A modern scientific approach to education combined with the vedic system of learning - protecting and developing the innate intelligence of the child who flowers without repression, fear or peer pressure

■ **Corporate Meditation Programs:**

Specially designed and conducted in corporate firms worldwide including Microsoft, AT&T, Qualcomm, JP Morgan, Petrobras, Pepsi, Oracle, American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) - with focus on intuitive management, leadership skills and team work.



■ **Nithyananda Institute of Teachers' Training:**

Over 300 teachers trained to teach: transformational meditation programs, Quantum Memory Program, Nithya Yoga, Health and Healing Programs, Spiritual Practice Programs and more

■ **Media:** Articles in national and international newspapers and magazines, carrying transforming messages from Nithyananda

■ **Nithyananda Publishers:** Over 5000 hours of Paramahansa Nithyananda's discourses transcribed, edited and published in-house and made available in stores through books, DVDs and CDs

■ **Life Bliss Gallerias:** Worldwide stores and mobile shops retailing recordings and books of Nithyananda's discourses and Nithya Kirtan recordings in 23 languages

■ **Nithyananda Meditation & Healing Centers:** Worldwide, offering meditation and healing services

- **Nithyananda Sangeeth Academy:** Music, dance and other forms of art taught and encouraged in youth and elderly alike - live and through internet
- **Free Discourses on YouTube:** Over 600 free discourses on www.youtube.com - wisdom from the master, easily accessible. Ranked top in viewership
- **Support to scientists and researchers:** Continually bridging gaps between science and spirituality through researches on spiritual energy and healing.
- **Nithyananda International Youth Foundation (NIYF):** A collection of inspired youth, building a divine and dynamic society with a common ideology of peace and enlightenment
- **Nithya Dheera Seva Sena:** Through transformation of self, this volunteer force of Ananda Sevaks trains and functions in the service of humanity, also serving as relief wing working towards disaster recovery management.

Contact Us

Listed below are some of the main centers of Nithyananda Mission.

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Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

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Nithyananda Galleria

A wide range of products for blissful living:

- Nithyananda's insightful messages on video, audio tapes, CDs and books in over 26 languages.



- Enlivening music and chants for meditation and inner healing.

- Meditation and yoga books, kits and CDs for rejuvenating body, mind and spirit.

- Energized rosaries, bracelets, photographs, clothing and gift items for a stimulating life style.

- Ethnic energy bead jewelry for men and women for tranquility and continued high energy.

Visit www.nithyanandagalleria.com or www.lifeblissgalleria.com for more information.

E-mail: nithyanandagalleria@gmail.com &
shop@lifebliss.org

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*Nithyananda
Galleria*

Suggested for Further Reading

- Living Enlightenment (Gospel of Paramahansa Nithyananda)

- Bhagavad Gita

- Nithyananda Vol. 1 (A biographical account of Nithyananda's life up to the age of 17)

- Guaranteed Solutions

- Don't Worry Be Happy

BLISS IS THE GOAL AND THE PATH

- Instant Tools for Blissful Living
- You Can Heal
- Follow Me In!
- The Door to Enlightenment
- Songs of Eternity (A coffee table book with Nithyananda's messages and pictures)
- You are No Sinner
- So You Want to Know The Truth?
- Uncommon answers to Common Questions

Over 500 FREE discourses of Nithyananda available
at <http://www.youtube.com/lifeblissfoundation>

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Nithyananda

Bliss is the Goal & the Path is a book about people for people. It is about the day-to-day problems that we face, how we struggle to cope with them vainly through our intellect and how we can resolve them with intelligence, if only we tune in to inner awareness.

This book is a compilation of Nithyananda's discourses covering a range of subjects, from how the mind works to how we abuse our bodies to coping with the duality of material and spiritual life. It answers many questions giving an updated understanding, kindling our inner we may live our lives in bliss.

Nithyananda says, 'Our senses carry deep intelligence. When our actions are contrary to what the senses deeply desire, they stop functioning. We feel so complacent about what our body feels, we are so ignorant about the intelligence of our body that we end up damaging it.'

Here is an opportunity for us to understand how to touch base with that inner awareness to attain to the bliss that is rightfully ours.

About the Author

Paramahansa Nithyananda, an enlightened master living amidst us today, walks on a mission to awaken us to inner bliss. While we are absorbed in reaching the peak of our intellect, he shows us the very depths of our Being. He offers solutions to our daily problems, with not just an assurance, but with a promise. 'Be Blissful' is his teaching, meditation and blessing. He teaches with no uncertainty that bliss is the goal and the path in life.

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